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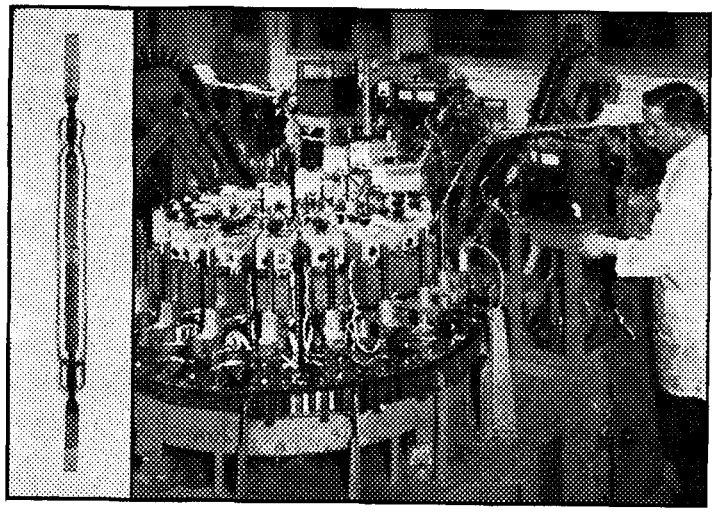

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The Impasse of American Optimism

ROBERT L. HEILBRONER

WE AMERICANS ARE BY TEMPERAMENT of a sanguine turn of mind. We are naturally sympathetic to ideas that stress the plasticity and promise, the openness of the future, and impatient with ideas that emphasize the "fated" aspect of human affairs. We strive to see in the challenges that beset us not obstacles but opportunities. In a word, we are an optimistic people.

When it is called to our attention in this fashion, we tend to conceive of our traditional optimism as a *personal* philosophy—as a character trait that sets our aspirations above the horizon of private circumstance. Thus we often overlook something that is much more fundamental. This is the fact that optimism, for all its emphasis on personal striving, does not ultimately rest on a judgment about our private capacities. It rests on a judgment about our *historic* capacities. At bottom, a philosophy of optimism is a historic attitude about the future—an attitude based on the tacit premise that the future will accommodate the striving which we bring to it.

Needless to say, we have never consciously based our outlook on a calculated estimate of the prospects for historic change. On the contrary, we have always been convinced that the future would be propitious because we would *make* it so. Yet it must be clear that for all the naturalness and spontaneity of our self-assurance, behind it lies a tacit estimate of the forces of historic change. If we have little doubt as to our ability to create a better world, it

✪ ROBERT L. HEILBRONER is the author of two books, *The Worldly Philosophers* and *The Quest for Wealth*, and of many articles on economics and social affairs.

This essay will appear in his forthcoming book, *The Future as History*, to be published in the spring.

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is because we have never questioned the kind of a world which is being created by the mass effects of scientific technology, by popular political aspiration, and by the dynamic inherent in our prevailing economic institutions. Thus when we say we are optimists, what we mean in fact is that we see no conflict between our chosen goals and the flow of history's currents. Indeed, we see each furthering the other.

To compare our continued trust in the future with the European distrust in it is not merely to contrast differences of psychologies or of national characteristics. We need only reflect on the course of the European disillusion to recognize that our different expectations toward the future reflect different experiences with the past. For it is apparent that our exposure to history has not been that of Europe. To mention only the most obvious but centrally important fact, we have enjoyed a geographic isolation from history's assaults utterly unknown in Europe. No explanation of our persistent optimism can overlook the inexpressible importance of our ocean boundaries and weak neighbors as a cushion and buffer against history's blows. The ever-present threat of military conquest, the frictions of international coexistence at close quarters—these paramount realities of European history have played, until the very recent past, only a negligible role in our national consciousness.

Then, too, the equally unique advantage of our material independence must not be forgotten. It has often been remarked that the American character was shaped by the presence of a huge and virtually uncontested continent, an enormous wealth of soil and ore and timber, a rugged but not impenetrable wilderness. Because the influence is well known does not mean that we can afford to lose sight of it. The abundance of nature has also been a circumstance of history that has markedly differentiated our expectations from those born in the more cramped environment of Europe.

A further cause of the optimistic mood that has always enthralled America must be sought in this nation's lack of an onerous past. If we have never displayed Europe's characteristic penchant for tragic thought, it is partly because we have never shared Europe's acquaintance with tragedy as an inseparable aspect of history.

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Unlike our mother nations, America has never known the enervating memories of long and inconclusive dynastic struggles, has never experienced the dragging weight of a changeless past, has never had to cope with the peasant tradition or with its resistance to change. In America we have no chastening ruins of past glories, no crumbling monuments to forgotten vanities. Of all these pointed and poignant traces of the past, these counsels of futility, we have been as unencumbered as a people could be.

As a consequence, the direction and the impact of the same historic forces were very different in Europe and in America. In Europe, for example, the democratic movement brought with it an inheritance of social bitterness. On the one hand, it grated on the sensibilities and the privileges of an entrenched aristocracy; on the other hand, it was from the beginning a movement with an inexpungeable animus toward the past. In America there was no such social inheritance. From the outset American democracy was the *only* political movement of consequence, and therefore it developed in a mood of uncontested self-assurance. Hence, when democracy in America, as in Europe, displayed its cultural and political shortcomings, it did not develop them in an atmosphere of tension, or with the possible consequences of total political upheaval or collapse. The historic force of democracy in America never displayed the face of *revolution* with which it was always uneasily associated abroad.

Again, in Europe the thrust of the new technology came upon a world already built, parceled out, stratified and orderly. From the beginning, the disruption caused by its mass industry was resisted or acquiesced in only fearfully—not alone by the old aristocracy but also by the newly arising laboring classes. In America, on the contrary, where patterns of society had not yet crystallized, the social disturbance brought about by the new industry was minimized. This is not to say that it did not exist or that the growth of industry did not blight American cities and stunt American lives. It was rather that these side-effects of technology did not impinge upon a community which was rooted with the tenacity of centuries in a division of labor and status inherited from the past. If tech-

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nology upset American society, at least it upset a society which believed in mobility and which trusted in change.

As a result, the forces of technology and democracy were able to develop here with a minimum of fears and resistances from the past. In an atmosphere of general enthusiasm, their electrifying influences combined with our natural abundance to impart to American capitalism an élan very different from that of Europe. The only thought that accurately reflected the social and economic openness of America was *expansion*; the corresponding thought which matched the closed realities of Europe was that of *restraint*. While European capitalism was from the beginning socially defensive and economically constricted, capitalism in America was free of both the rigidities of social structure and the boundaries of economic horizons. Hence, America planned and built on a gargantuan scale, and its pace of advance was prodigious. Within fifty years of the death of Daniel Webster, our national wealth increased from less than a third that of Great Britain's to surpass it by more than a quarter. Our share of the world's total industrial production grew from insignificance in the beginning of the nineteenth century to over 20 per cent by 1860, and then to over 40 per cent by 1913.

Against this background of spectacular expansion, the fact that growth was uneven, attended by outrageous differentials between rich and poor, often wasteful and socially ruthless, simply did not matter—at least so far as our expectations were concerned. The accumulation of wealth on an unprecedented scale was the overriding reality of American history that carried all dissents and discontents before it.

Therefore, whereas we may have begun as optimists out of conviction, we remained so out of conditioning. For looking back over the special circumstances that favored our national career and that shaped our national character, we can see that we were spared the one exposure fatal for a philosophy of optimism. This was the experience that Europe suffered, first by small degrees, and then in overwhelming assault: an exposure to the forces of history not as the proponents but as the opponents of our volitions. Not only were

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we saved, by virtue of our geographic quarantine, from the impact of national wills other than our own, but by virtue of our clean historic slate, we were spared the drag and friction of an encumbering past. Thus circumstances conspired to give full rein to the historic forces at work in our midst, rather than, as in Europe, presenting them at every turn with obstacles and barriers. Democracy, technology and capitalism all enjoyed an unobstructed course within the American environment, and all displayed a corresponding vitality of development.

Only once in our history, until the very recent past, did we find ourselves confronted with a situation in which these aspects of our national development seemed to run perversely and unaccountably counter to our expectations and efforts. This was the Great Depression. But the dazed perplexity which that experience aroused in us, the sense of incredulity that the Depression would not "cure itself," the extreme reluctance to believe that its cause might be rooted deep in the historic force of capitalist expansion— all this was testimony to the degree with which our experience with a benign past resulted in a fixity of expectations concerning the future.

H. G. Wells, writing on *The Future in America* in 1906, characterized the national temper as "a sort of optimistic fatalism." It was an apt observation. For as we strove to move in the very direction in which our social, political and economic drives propelled us, and for which our geographic advantages fitted and protected us, we were never aware that our movement was due to any source other than the power of our wills, or that it might have any limitation other than our own aspirations. Still less did we entertain the idea that the forces of history might go against our volitions. The knowledge that history was replete with instances in which nations had been defeated, rebuffed or denied their aims, not through errors of their own making, but by the opposition of sheer adverse circumstance, was a fact without relevance for our national experience. As have been few peoples on earth, we were permitted the belief that we were the sole masters of our destiny; and as have been few peoples on earth, we were.

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It is precisely this sense of mastery of the past that contrasts so sharply with the present. For the common attribute of contemporary events is not their responsiveness to our designs, but their indifference to them. Try as we will to steer our national course as we wish, we find our course being steered by events over which we seem to exert little if any control: the threat of nuclear war, the chronic disorders of the newly aroused nations of the East and South, the relentless pressure of communism, or simply the internal changes of our own society. History less and less presents itself as something we *make*, and more and more as something we find made for us. The mastery over our destiny, which has always been an unthinking assumption of our voyage into the hopeful future, now seems in danger of being wrested away by forces that neither precedent nor intuitive understanding illumine for us.

Yet when we look more closely at the disturbing trends of current events, we find to our surprise that they are all familiar to us. One of them, which presents itself in the guise of the frightening technology of war, is of course the outgrowth of the scientific and technological development of the past. A second, which manifests itself as the revolutionary turbulence of the newly risen areas of the world, reflects nothing so much as the ideas of political aspiration that burst upon the world in 1789. A third, the global movement toward communism and socialism, can be seen also in the grand line of economic development whose early stages produced the capitalism of Adam Smith.

And so it is that when we seek to identify the currents of world history that now assail and defy us, we find ourselves ironically enough considering the very forces that some three centuries ago infused the future with hope and gave rise to the optimistic philosophy. Now, however, these forces have assumed a direction and dimension utterly unlike that of their appearance in our own history. It is obvious that the scientific and technological revolution has attained a momentum compared with which even our own past pace of technical progress appears as only a first stage of crude tooling-up. Certainly the ideas of political aspiration, planted among the billion and a half human beings who have until now existed

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in unspeakable poverty and neglect, will have a different outcome from the cultivation of those same ideas among the peoples of eighteenth-century Europe or our own nation. And equally clearly, the economic development of capitalism takes on a wholly new guise when it is viewed in the context of a world which is now largely organized into non- or even anti-capitalist societies.

Thus if the origins of today's forces of historic change are familiar to us, their contemporary portents are very different from the era in which they gave rise to our optimistic expectations of history. Cast in a wholly new setting, these forces are bringing about changes so vast, in a time span so compressed, and with adjustments so convulsive, that it is as if huge seismic slippages were occurring in the deepest substratum of history. As this ponderous shifting of historic masses takes place, it is not surprising that the globe shakes and that fissures open up beneath the strongest fortress walls.

Before these ominous developments of history, we react with the natural attitudes of our optimistic conditioning. If there are "forces" in history, we prefer not to think about them; and if we must think about them, we assume that they will be, as they always have been, on our side. As a result, while history has made mock of our plans, it has not weakened our confidence in our ability to shape our destiny as we wish. We are certain that the blame for the untoward drift of things can be laid at the doorstep of this President or that Congress. We continue to tell ourselves, in the face of successive rebuffs, that what we need above all is a fresh sense of purpose, a fresh idea of what to do. The one thought that does not enter our minds is that what we may more urgently need is a fresh sense of what to expect.

Yet it must be apparent that our philosophy of expectations is a parochial and sheltered one. The idea that there may be challenges in history that are irresistible, pitiless, unyielding; the thought that a people may often be not the masters but the prisoners of their time with no alternative but to bow before its demands; the intimation that there may sometimes be very little that a nation can do to bring about a state of world affairs or of domestic

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society that would approximate its desires—these are all conceptions about history which our optimism makes it extremely difficult for us to consider, much less accept.

Whether we shall have to accept these ideas only the future will tell. But what is already beyond peradventure of doubt is that the essential nature of the American encounter with history is changing, and that our optimism is a handicap in appreciating that change and in assessing its implications. For our optimism blinds us to a central reality of our historic situation: that after a long voyage in which the favoring currents of history bore us in the direction in which we sought to navigate, we have emerged into an open sea where powerful contrary winds come directly into conflict with our passage. To America—if not to Europe or to most of the rest of the world—this is an utterly new experience. It is as if history of a kind we had never known before were closing in upon us. We must try to understand what its portents for the future may be.

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A Critical Look at Psychology

STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN

A CONSIDERABLE PRESUMPTION is involved when a man criticizes a field not his own, particularly when that field is as multiverse as psychology. The presumption increases when the criticism is based on a reading acquaintance with only the tiniest fraction of the literature in one small area, and a few friends in the field who must be thoroughly unrepresentative, in that they exhibit none of its defects or failings. All I can say in extenuation is that it is the engagingly old-fashioned habit of literary criticism to insist that it still takes all knowledge to be its province, and that the impulse is friendly, based on an enormous respect for the field of psychology and a sharing of its aspirations. Sometimes an amateur can see things that the professional misses, or at the very least his insolence can annoy the professional into considering matters usually outside his specialized sphere. Still, perhaps "look" in my title is overambitious. Call it "glance" or "squint."

Psychology arose historically as a branch of philosophy (where it is still ensconced in some booksellers' catalogues, if no longer in academic departments). The earliest development of its insights, however, came from writers, Sigmund Freud repeatedly credited the poets with anticipating his discoveries (by delving into their own psyches, he said), and how could he have acknowledged the debt more prettily than by naming the complex he considered nuclear after the protagonist in two plays by Sophocles? Thomas Hardy knew psychoanalysis, Freud once told C. P. Oberndorf, meaning it in the sense in which we rediscover the mechanisms of depth psychology each time we open Shakespeare.

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In noting these anticipations and intuitions, however, we must not minimize the difference between writers and psychologists. Athenian tragedies are, in fact, oddly unpsychological (someone remarked that there was more psychology in a page of Proust than in the whole extant corpus of Greek drama), in that in them character always arises out of action, never the reverse. King Oedipus, we must remember, has no explicit Oedipus complex in Sophocles' play of that name: he killed his father and married his mother in all innocence, although he *is* oddly short-tempered with gentlemen of his father's generation, and he seems to have shown no reluctance about marrying a widow well along in years. Oedipus' daughter Antigone has something that looks much more like a traditional complex, although even here it is not very explicit. Sophocles' predecessor Aeschylus is fuller and clearer about motivation in such characters as Clytemnestra in the *Agamemnon,* but only by the time we get to Euripides do we begin to rival case history: the marvelous comic agon between anal-character father and anal-character son in the *Alcestis*; the classic disintegration of the repressed homosexual personality of King Pentheus in *The Bacchae.*

Even in the adventure stories of that busy syndicate we call Homer there are touches that stagger us by their psychological truth: the boy Astyanax' terror of his father's great erect helmet crest in *Iliad* 6; Penelope's dream of the eagle and geese in *Odyssey* 19, with its eloquent wish-fulfillment and elaborate condensation and displacement. Nor did the ancient Greeks have a monopoly on psychological insight. The other major progenitor of Western culture, the Hebrew Bible, is fully as knowledgeable, and it should be a chastening experience for the modern psychologist to reread (or read) the history of Saul and his "bloody house" in the books of Samuel, and see the complexities of emotional relationship in the odd triangle of mad, hostile Saul, smitten Jonathan and ambivalent David.

All this is perhaps a long running start for some strictures against current American psychology, except insofar as the literary critic, with his tiny capital invested in Homer and the Bible, Greek drama and Shakespeare, Proust and Thomas Hardy, can fairly ask what the new management thinks it is doing to the old firm. Perhaps, to paraphrase a cynical saying, every country gets the psy-

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chologists it deserves; but I am not sure that justice is that poetic. In any case, I should like to suggest five limitations in current American psychology as I have encountered them. The examples are drawn almost entirely from the human-adjustment psychology we outsiders get to read about—psychoanalysis, psychiatry, clinical psychology—but no evidence suggests that these things are less true of the manipulators of earthworms and golden hamsters.

The first is an inadequate history and culture, ranging from simple, provincial ignorance to a self-righteous hostility, strongly Calvinist in nature. Many psychologists seem to be ignorant even of the history of their own field, or to despise their founding fathers as obsolete, unscientific old fuddy-duddies. "We *know* so much more than they did," T. S. Eliot says, phrasing a similar attitude in regard to the poets of the past, and answers it, "Precisely, and they are that which we know." I have heard a young psychologist dismiss as ludicrous the most enthralling case history I have read, Morton Prince's *The Dissociation of a Personality,* because Prince had the misfortune to write it in 1905 rather than in 1959, to know less depth psychology in 1905 than my young acquaintance does in 1959, and not to be equally aware that the successive personalities Miss Beauchamp developed might be artifacts of Prince's own creation. Yet the imaginative power and breadth of Prince's picture of the human personality still make the case a revelation to read, and Prince was improvising his theory as he went along, like Charcot, Janet or Freud, and managed in addition to become mayor of Boston, as none of the rest of them did. When Drs. Corbett H. Thigpen and Hervey M. Cleckley published the record of a similar case as *The Three Faces of Eve* in 1957, with far less excuse than Prince for being unaware that the successive personalities might be artifacts of the therapists', their book, written as sensationally and badly as Prince's book was written with dignity and style, was introduced rapturously by a past president of the American Psychological Association and apparently was taken seriously in the field.

If many American psychologists know little about the history of their own discipline, they seem to know less about the history and values of anything else. When they are concerned with literature or the arts at all, it is as simple projective tests for revealing the warp of the individual or the culture, and they are far more apt to take

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their examples exclusively from films, soap operas and comic strips than from Cervantes, Pushkin or Montaigne. This seems much less true of the European-born among American psychologists, perhaps because their education was broader, perhaps because they have been encouraged to see themselves as heirs of the culture, rather than new settlers building on its ruins. How far we have come from the ideal of a man like William James, at home in half a dozen disciplines, or Freud, reading eight languages and their literatures, studying archaeology and anthropology, collecting antiquities and Yiddish jokes.

The second weakness I see in American psychology is a philosophical shallowness and superficial optimism. I have already stated my views along these lines in an essay, "Psychoanalysis and the Climate of Tragedy," in *Partisan Review* for Spring, 1956, and I do not here propose to repeat those chillingly blithe quotations about human nature and destiny from such neo-Freudians as Karen Horney, Erich Fromm and Clara Thompson. I have since, however, encountered a book that seems to me a representative specimen of inspirational psychology, *Why You Do What You Do: A Guide to Self-Understanding*, edited by two laymen, Robert N. Linscott and Jess Stein. Here, along with some excellent contributions by serious therapists, one can learn from "a leading American psychiatrist" that adolescent hostility and aggression can be cured by "a well-organized social program," or see "one of New York's leading psychiatrists" solve the problems of impotence and frigidity with such vulgar wisdom as "Encouragement by a wife, even a well-placed bit of flattery after a successful contact, may pay enormous dividends." I hope there is no need to quote further. A similar philosophic shallowness and optimism, it seems to me, distinguishes those psychologists at the other end of the tonal spectrum from these cheery oracles, the cynical whores of motivation research who are so contemptuous of mankind that they believe we are "easier to be played on than a pipe" (a quotation, incidentally, from the creator of one of the earliest motivation analysts in literature, Dr. Iago).

Third, I should like to note the tendency of American psychology toward oversimplification, its apparent preference for the reductive and the mechanistic rather than the complex tangled

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bank of life. This, among the experimental psychologists, results in a passion for quantification and results that are expressible in statistical tables. These rigors are always defended as the only way in which psychology can become a true empirical science, yet in reality they are the only way psychology can eliminate so many factors not susceptible of quantification as to become as shapely and remote from life as classical economics. Where the experimental psychologists want quantification, many clinical psychologists appear to want a similarly reductive empirical success: tests that will have a high diagnostic efficiency even if the actual relationship of manifestations to meanings remains as mysterious as augury; short-cut treatments that will calm or cure as magically as exorcism. And so many psychoanalysts and psychiatrists seem principally to want a showy new term or theory they can call their own, an "Orestes" complex or a "gambling" neurosis. The latter term, by the way, I get from a book, Edmund Bergler's *The Psychology of Gambling*, which has one of the funniest unconscious puns I know —the author's boast that a patient he treated for impotence "is today one of the pillars of the bar association." Perhaps all of these—tables and statistics, tests and short cuts, terms and theories —similarly can be pillars of the impotent.

My fourth criticism is the related matter of narrowness and overspecialization. I would regard its characteristic myopic preoccupation with a facet of a segment of an approach to one aspect of a problem as primarily responsible (cultural inadequacy is certainly a factor too) for the awful prose in which most current psychology seems to be written. Early in the twenties, I learn from Frederick J. Hoffman's *Freudianism and the Literary Mind*, a girl named Mercy Rogers read through 102 books on psychoanalysis and allied subjects and then killed herself. Today she could not have gotten through the curdled and clotted prose of half that number anywhere in the field of psychology before turning on the gas.

We have for so long been told of the gains (and they are impressive gains) obtained through specialization, teamwork and interdisciplinary co-operation, that it is about time we began to notice the losses. As long ago as 1950, in *Childhood and Society*, Erik H. Erikson warned that interdisciplinary teamwork was "a

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kind of halt-and-blind cooperation, in which a social scientist with little psychological vision carries in a piggy-back fashion a psychologist who has not learned to move with ease in the larger events of this world, so that together they may grope their way through contemporary history." In the Summer, 1958, issue of the *Northwest Review*, a political scientist, Lucian C. Marquis, delivered a full-scale attack on interdisciplinary teamwork. "It is time," he suggested, "that we call for a cease-fire, in order to assess the price of our victory and to count the casualties," which include, in his view, initiative, independence, creativity, invention, "thwarted individuality and the leveling of tastes and interests." Specialization seems inevitably forced on the modern social scientist, and some co-operation of specialists must follow as a consequence, but none of the by-products is inevitable, least of all the new "team man," with his extraordinary efficiency in a narrow groove, his unconcerned and routine respect for all fellow specialists, and his nervous resentment of anything intuitive, imaginative, sweeping and uncategorizable, or anything that might menace the easy money for projects in which everyone is a neatly-fitting cog.

My final stricture, and the only one perhaps less valid now than in the past, is the amazing tolerance of psychology for superstition and occultism. I am aware that my own hero, Freud, was an incorrigible sucker for telepathy (as he was for the curious delusion that the Earl of Oxford was William Shakespeare), but at least he had the good sense to make it extracanonical. He wrote to Ernest Jones: "When anyone adduces my fall into sin, just answer him calmly that conversion to telepathy is my private affair like my Jewishness, my passion for smoking and many other things, and that the theme of telepathy is in essence alien to psychoanalysis." Carl Jung, on the other hand, has made an impressive range of occultisms part of his dogmatic system, of which the possibility of flying saucers is only the latest and funniest.

I am not, however, primarily referring to such famous aberrations as these, but to the tolerance and even respect accorded by American psychology to a wide variety of charlatans and necromancers. I would instance Wilhelm Reich and the "orgone" box as an example of the former, and J. B. Rhine and "parapsychology" as an example of the latter. Before he died Reich was put out of

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business, not by any organization of psychologists, but by the Food and Drug Administration. Rhine continues to prosper in an academic institution, while his experiments are respectfully repeated in a number of places, as if one were to reproduce the experiments of the Fox sisters in table rapping. When a poltergeist recently manifested itself on Long Island in a household containing two adolescent children, the representatives of psychological science who investigated it were not the child psychologists we might expect, but a team of parapsychologists from Duke University, and their learned report concluded that "psychokinesis" (the manipulation of matter by mental powers) seemed the likeliest explanation. It is a disturbing experience to look up "Psychologists" in the New York classified telephone directory and see the listings for "metaphysician," "psychometaphysical healing," "auto-suggestion," "mental healing," "Yoga" and "astrological interpretation of human nature."

I should not like, in this foolhardy endeavor, to create either of two false impressions: that I undervalue the enormous wealth of knowledge and benefit psychology has produced in its brief history; or that I believe the field of literature to be free of comparable failings. Even where the two disciplines come together, literature has often been more sinning than sinned against. For the work of every I. A. Richards, creating something like experimental conditions in which to study the reading of poems, or Lionel Trilling, bringing the full range of Freud's tragic vision to bear on literature, or Kenneth Burke, synthesizing a complex and rewarding eclectic psychology for the uses of literary criticism, there are surely a hundred critics for whom psychology is a narrowly reductive positivism, a chance to become a pundit of parlor psychoanalysis and play Peeping Tom with impunity, or a weapon with which to mutilate the corpses of the illustrious dead. After all, it was a literary critic, not a wild-eyed psychologist, who indicted the California orange as "an extraverted thing."

Nevertheless, the imaginative insights of the literary arts can broaden and enrich the field of psychology. Psychologists must approach them, however, with humility and even a touch of awe, not with the arrogance and self-assurance that seem to go with an M.D. in the field. I have in mind Edmund Bergler, pontificating in *The*

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Writer and Psychoanalysis about the mysteries of "the creative process" after analytic experience with a handful of neurotic hacks, or A. Bronson Feldman, in his contribution to *Explorations in Psychoanalysis,* exploring Dante, Goethe and Shakespeare primarily as repressed homosexuals with castration complexes, paranoia and masochistic cyclothymia.

Let us be clear, for example, about just what that masochistic cyclothymic William Butler Yeats is saying when he writes in "A Prayer for My Daughter":

> It's certain that fine women eat
> A crazy salad with their meat

or in "Two Songs from a Play":

> Whatever flames upon the night
> Man's own resinous heart has fed.

or in "The Circus Animals' Desertion":

> Now that my ladder's gone,
> I must lie down where all the ladders start,
> In the foul rag-and-bone shop of the heart.

He is not, for one thing, parading his neurotic symptoms for us, although they were plentiful enough, certainly. He is not making a series of denotative statements or pseudo statements about reality, ranging from the truism (that ladies eat tossed salads), through the mistaken (that the heart is a pine knot rather than the large muscle we know it to be), to the meaningless (that unspecified lost ladders can be retrieved in an unattractive junk shop somehow associated with the circulatory system, or, perhaps, the emotions). Nor is he projecting his hopes and fears as they are triggered by phantasms, nor pouring out his free associations, nor even producing a kind of entertaining nonsense patterned by meter and rhyme. What he is doing is telling us the profoundest truths he knows about the human condition, in a metaphoric language not paraphrasable in any other words, and he is giving us these truths in as controlled and impersonal a fashion (although the manner of discourse differs) as any experimental scientist reporting his conclusions.

Characteristically, Yeats's insights are neither optimistic nor cheering. They suggest that man is a wounded animal condemned to die, his impulses nasty and destructive, his hopes largely con-

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fined to enduring his condition and controlling his nature. These are the traditional conclusions of the gloomier philosophers and poets, and we call them the tragic vision if we choose to emphasize the brightness of the flame as the resinous heart burns, or stoicism if we focus on the charred tissue itself. There is less difference than twenty-two centuries might suggest between Freud's remarks in *The Future of an Illusion* on "the painful riddle of death, for which no remedy at all has yet been found, nor probably ever will be," and Callimachus' epigram on Charidas of Cyrene in the Greek Anthology:

> "What is it like below, Charidas?"
> "Very dark."
> "And what about the resurrection?"
> "All lies."
> "And Pluto?"
> "A fable."
> "Then I am done for."

What are traditionally called the humanities can furnish psychology, or, more properly, psychologists, with this bitter yet ultimately most rewarding vision of human nature and destiny. Actually, the relationship is wholly symbiotic, since literature in turn needs and must increasingly lean on this sort of deeper and truer psychology (along with a comparably enriched sociology and anthropology, and perhaps eventually a great unified science of man, clearing *all* the jungles). Beyond the parochial concerns of the literary critic, the whole world needs a better, more profound, and more influential psychology. It was easy enough to get into our present predicaments in innocent ignorance, like the younger son in a fairy tale, but only that combination of knowledge and virtue we call wisdom seems likely to get us even part-way out.

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Candlemas

LEONARD McCARTHY, S.J.

The kings are toppled down and lie in sleet.
The partridge in the pear tree flies away.
On some other feast or octave day,
If God will rest us merry, we shall meet.
If God shall rest us merry, down some street
In windy Pentecost or sour Lent
We still can buy their diadems for rent,
We still can clang their camel bells for treat.

And when we move between the holy Chairs,
And beg for comfort from the common cold,
When tears and virus run down all our prayers
As if we never touched the Magi's gold,
If God will rest us merry, we shall meet
Mary, singing down the winter street.

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The Quest of Excellence

A Humanistic Utopia

ALBERT GUÉRARD

DR. JOHN GARDNER headed an impressive panel of fifteen educators in the preparation of *The Pursuit of Excellence*. Walter Lippmann in his turn discovered, with evident surprise and delight, "the importance of excellence," particularly in the educational field. When our National Pundit oraculates, America bows its hundred and seventy million heads: so a mighty chorus—divines, commentators, university presidents—has been singing a hymn of praise to Excellence, the new deity. According to Lerner Maximus, this was the keynote in most commencement addresses of the 1959 season; and he added his own basso profundo to the resounding wave.

Mankind craves verbal idols: we are all like the old lady of folklore who found such unspeakable spiritual comfort in the blesséd word *Mesopotamia*. The great virtue of verbal idols is that, by appeasing our hunger and thirst for righteousness, they soften our harsh duty to think clearly and act consistently. Shibboleths are like the broken promises of a drunkard: a new one can always be made, "just as good." Manifest Destiny, the Strenuous Life, Service, the World Made Safe for Democracy, the War(s) To End War, Rugged Individualism—all belong to the fading past. The American Way of Life—Free Enterprise at home and unquestioned leadership abroad—is showing manifest symptoms of lassitude. So we are in the market for a new song. As a loyal American, I am willing to admit, one hundred per cent, that *excellence* is a good thing.

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Let's have a bigger and better excellence then; but as a spiritual son of Missouri, I should love to find out what it means.

Here the egghead shows his cloven foot—that is to say, his French upbringing. We hold this truth to be self-evident that "to reason why" is an un-English, un-American activity. As a matter of fact, in my formative years I was deeply influenced by English thought; so deeply that I refuse to accept, as in plain defiance of the facts, the British cult of muzziness, or in loftier terms, "the wisdom of prejudice." Most of the clear-cut ideas upon which the West has been living for the last three hundred years were defined by British thinkers: Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Newton, Adam Smith, Malthus, Bentham, Darwin. And Burke himself, with the crystal clarity of the British mind, formulated the doctrine of obscurantism more luminously than Hamann or De Maistre.

You cannot plot the position of a point in absolute space: according to Pascal, every point is the center of the universe. Similarly, there is no absolute meaning to any word. *Excellence* must be defined either by reference to a stated ideal or by comparison with other contenders. The first conception may be called intrinsic; the second, relative. In any given event, the winner *excels.* The tortoise can easily beat the snail, and the snail the oyster. In the realm of the blind, runs the French proverb, the one-eyed are kings.

Intrinsically, *excellence* is the nearest approach to *perfection.* "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." And these Gospel words were echoed by Matthew Arnold, who defined culture as "the pursuit of our total perfection." It is odd, by the way, that in this nominally Christian country, *perfectionist* should be a term of derision, as *do-gooder* is a term of reproach. Yet the cynic has his point. Beware of perfection: for, if taken literally, it would abolish human reality. In the terse phrase of Paul Valéry, "Existence is but a flaw in the perfection of non-being." Perfection cannot be achieved except through total resorption into the One: and that is nirvana. On this lofty plane, excellence is to be sought beyond words and deeds, in the mystic experience alone. Aldous Huxley preached that gospel, with the

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Grey Eminence, Father Joseph, as his whipping boy. This may be good Zen Buddhism: but openly it lies beyond sense. If we are to think at all, we must think in terms of *relative* perfection and *relative* excellence.

Shall we define perfection as conformity to standards? But how, and by whom, are the standards established? By God Himself, through the various conflicting bibles of mankind, all imperfect? By tradition, Burke's "wisdom of prejudice" again? By logic, or freedom from inconsistency? By pragmatic efficiency, "that which works"? But whatever definition we may adopt for the term *standard* and for the correlative term *value*, it will lead us to the ideal of *standardization*. This is with us an all too familiar notion: perfection as interchangeability; every American a rugged individualist exactly like everybody else. (The French equivalent is: *"Un Monsieur distingué—comme tout le monde."*) What if excellence were to imply the spurning of standards? What if *to excel* meant to transcend conformity?

Our key words, *standards* and *values*, are linked with a third, *purpose*. When Kant defined art as "adequacy to purpose," he was careful to add "without purpose": else its purity would be imperiled. But except in the realm of grace—art, love, religion—the purpose, not the perfection, is of the essence. We do not admit that a perfect crime is excellent, that a perfect disease is desirable, that a perfect politician is a boon to mankind. There are cases, no doubt, in which an intelligent scoundrel might be less dangerous to society than a well-meaning fool, because the basis of workable ethics is cogent thinking. "Let us strive to think exactly," said Pascal, "for that is the foundation of moral life." But even in art—which etymologically means technique—technical perfection is not the highest goal: rather a crude genius like Douanier Rousseau than "faultless painters" like Andrea del Sarto, Alma-Tadema or Bouguereau. So if excellence is the closest possible conformity to a standard, we are led to establish a hierarchy among standards; and we are as perplexed as ever.

We are led to realize that the pursuit of excellence implies a fight on two fronts: one against chaos, which paralyzes, and the

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other against conformity, which deadens. We have to shift our forces from one front to the other. Let me draw an example from my own line of work, the theory of literature. Flaubert sought excellence by striving for *le mot juste,* the inevitable expression, scientifically accurate, deserving to be adopted as standard. But Paul Verlaine also pursued excellence when he preached: *"Il faut aussi que tu n'ailles point / Choisir tes mots sans quelque méprise. . . ."* Be sure *not* to pick out your words unerringly: for poetic excellence lies in the blur, the shimmer, the chiaroscuro. The wrong word may be plainly wrong: but it may also be supremely right, as the venture beyond stock thoughts and hackneyed feelings. Thought, art and faith need order; but it must be a dynamic order, rooted in the future, the substance of things hoped for. Flaubert chose to live in a static world, the world of things as they are; in such a world, dynamism is subversion.

We may now attempt to apply these general principles in the field of education. There *excellence* might mean two things which, although opposed, need not be antagonistic. The first is the policy we have been following so far: *leveling,* but, we hope, with an upward trend. We have long agreed that every child should master the three R's. High school education is fast becoming universal. This may be true, within measurable time, of a college education. And why not graduate work as well? In a democracy, nothing is too good for the Common Man. Every scavenger a Ph.D., every Ph.D. a Pico della Mirandola. This would be excellence indeed. Such leveling would not necessarily entail universal mediocrity. The natural differences would manifest themselves higher up, or in other spheres.

I do not reject offhand this quantitative and equalitarian ideal. It is still utopian at the present time: this country, bursting with riches, cannot afford to give every child an excellent education. We have to keep our institutions of learning half-starved, from the kindergarten to the research institute, in order to overfeed luxuries, advertising and nuclear armaments: this is an all too real and thoroughly unrealistic world. But the wisdom of giving all men the

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same kind and the same amount of education is open to challenge. As a teacher for well over half a century, and, I may add, as "a man of the people," a believer in democracy, a hater of privileges, I submit that it might be well for the vast majority of boys and girls to go into apprenticeship after completing their high school course. Possibly, as David Starr Jordan advocated sixty years ago, a six-year high school, absorbing the junior college, would be the answer. This would be a close equivalent to the German Gymnasium and the French Lycée. In any case, the advanced education of tomorrow, as in ages past, should be reserved to the few.

The chosen few? The happy few? The intelligentsia? The elite? An aristocracy, a clergy of technocrats in every field? I hate the words and the thought. To claim membership in an elite is to be self-branded with incurable vulgarity. The essential human values that make life worth living—good health, good sense, good humor, willingness to work, consideration for others—do not depend in the least upon formal knowledge. The men who ran the death factories of Auschwitz, Buchenwald and Dachau were highly trained; and there were beautiful lives before the atom was split. Lovers, poets, prophets and saints need not be erudite; and there are surly fools among the learned.

In a world of dignity, peace of mind and leisure, one which would be within our reach if only we foreswore our false gods, the essential gifts of the nonspecialists would have a better chance to blossom out. The great words we still read with awe and delight were uttered by men who, by the standards of our graduate schools, lived in Stygian darkness. The technocrats, including the highest scientists, are in greater danger than the Common Man of turning into robots. They are good servants; they are not supermen. Einstein himself, when he left the realm of transcendental mathematics and physics, was a good average "liberal" of the H. G. Wells type. So far, the scientists have implemented the evil instincts of man and have not been able to control them. They have given a tragic intensity to the primitive threat of massive retaliation. They may be needed to keep us abreast of the enemy in the Cold War that inevitably will explode into Armageddon. They may enable the Free

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World to send a goat into the fifth satellite of Saturn before the Russians. But they are totally impotent to secure for us sanity and peace. Brunetière was right seventy years ago when he proclaimed that Science, as the spiritual light of mankind, was bankrupt; and with Science, her coarse-featured daughter, Technology. Fortunately, Renan's sinister utopia of a world ruled with a rod of iron by the Academy of Sciences is not a serious threat. The Common Man will not be enslaved. And the capacities of the Common Man —work, play, love and dreams—are what I call the human or humane values; and the releasing, the refining, the training of these capacities are what I call a humanistic education.

As "the chief dignity of man is Thought" (*toujours* Pascal!), the core of a humanistic education is the art of thinking. This art is not purely intellectual; it cannot be reduced to formal logic. It implies a moral attitude: the desire to know the truth, the will to follow the light, the willingness to sacrifice if need be the rugged individualism of immediate self-interest. Such a training was for centuries the unchallenged quest of the Western world. It was the ideal of the medieval school of arts, preserved at Oxford and Cambridge, in the German Gymnasium and the French Lycée. Its aim was to prepare *un honnête homme*: a Christian, and not a bigot; a scholar, and not a prig; a gentleman, and not a snob. This ideal was dimmed by a thickening crust of traditions. But break the crust, and the flame will shine again.

Now my contention is that this all-important goal can and should be reached *in adolescence*. Thus prepared, the young would be able to absorb technical training, either through apprenticeship or through advanced studies, without being absorbed by it. The humanities alone will enable them to remain human.

In my own experience, I owe my formation to Lycée teachers, not—much as I liked and respected them—to my university professors. After eighteen, I was consciously on my own. I know also that most of the courses I have been offering even to graduate students should have been given in high school. Boys and girls of sixteen are more receptive to essential ideas than candidates for the Ph.D., who are already the victims of a professional deformation.

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The center of the humanities is not erudition, even at first-hand: it is good will guided by clear thinking. Clear thinking implies the critical spirit and the experimental method: prove or probe all things, and most of all "self-evident truths." In things of the spirit, *experience* is even more essential than *experiment*. To learn the names and dates of dusty worthies, which you are resolved to forget as soon as you have secured your degree, has no humanistic value whatever. To *experience* is to enjoy: understanding means simply the clarification, purification and deepening of our enjoyment. A man who responds to Shakespeare, on the stage or in book form, is nearer salvation than one who, with icy detachment, has computed the proportion of feminine rhymes in *Henry VIII*.

Eternal vigilance! When, breaking away from decadent scholasticism, Europe recaptured the spirit of antiquity, vast and free, the pedants created at once a thick layer of erudition, and called it "humanism." When at last the blind worship of Greek and Latin texts began to fade, "scientific" critics evolved a new kind of factual learning as a screen against direct experience. Once again, the fact-finders strove hard to dehumanize humanism.

Sainte-Beuve taught and practiced the doctrine that biography is the key to criticism; Taine introduced the prestigious formula "Race, Environment and Momentum": both of which are fallacies. Keats knew nothing about Homer except that—if he ever existed—he was born in seven different cities. We know scrupulously nothing about the author of *Job*, a drama which, as Renan and Archibald MacLeish have demonstrated, still has the power of stirring us to the depths. People with exactly the same "race and environment," like Jean-Jacques Rousseau and his forgotten brother, may live in different worlds of the spirit. I fully agree with Marcel Proust's denunciation of Sainte-Beuve: he gave us searching psychological portraits, but of no critical value. He failed to understand Balzac, Stendhal, Vigny, Baudelaire, the later and greater Hugo: an almost perfect score. In the light of Proust's demonstration, I am both irked and amused by the "scholarly" attempts to substitute erudition about Proust for the enjoyment of Proust. Do

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we need to know that Charles Haas (and half a dozen others) sat for the portrait of Charles Swann? That there is something of Montesquiou in Charlus? And that Albertine is probably Alfred Agostinelli transposed?

To fulfill the ancient and ever new ideal I have in mind, American secondary education would need a profound reform. First of all, it should be made attractive, in financial reward and in prestige, to humanists of a high degree. It ought to offer lifelong careers, not a few years of impatient drudgery before the blesséd release of matrimony. In Germany, France and England, there were high school teachers such as Mallarmé, Bergson (for seventeen years), Alain; and, with proper question marks and raising of eyebrows, James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence and Oswald Spengler.

The overemphasis on sports, social pleasure and "community adjustment" would have to be curbed. Above all, erudition on the one hand, technical training on the other, should be minimized. A stream of fresh and free thought, to quote Matthew Arnold again, should be turned on our stock notions, with results which may seem startling: a late twentieth-century humanism—I am taking the bull by the horns—actually has little use for the classical languages. All their essential values have long been absorbed into our modern culture. High school students hardly ever reach the point where they can read the originals with thorough understanding and enjoyment. All they do is to improvise clumsy translations—not seldom with the aid of crib or pony. In the same spirit, humanism might well discard much literary history. It is a waste to remember the poets laureate of eighteenth-century England, or even our own revered Joel Barlow, Bryant, Whittier, Lowell, when Goethe, Hugo, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky beckon. World masterpieces, not the annals of the parish, will provide the needed approach. Contemporary literature and creative writing are better educational instruments than the biographies and bibliographies of ghostly third-raters. Philosophy, as it was with Socrates and with Descartes, should be a declaration of independence, a sweeping of cobwebs, an assumption of personal responsibility in wrestling with

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the problems that most concern us: "true philosophy laughs at philosophy." It cannot be reduced to a weary exposé of systems that never lived. A man might be intelligent without being on familiar terms with Leibniz' monad, or with Santayana's essences. According to the Master himself, not one of the eighteen disciples who collaborated in the symposium *The Philosophy of George Santayana* understood what he meant by *essences.*

Do I mean to say that education in the fullest sense should stop at sixteen? Exactly the reverse: it is the moment when it should begin. Schooling is but an initiation: graduation means *commencement.* That continued education—at eighty, mine is still hobbling along—can take many forms. The most obvious is that of cultural interests cherished in leisure hours; and our leisure ought to be ample, if we cash in on the progress of automation, if we break in time the infernal circles of machines producing more machines and so ad infinitum. Let the robots do the work; we shall attend to the thinking. Good books, plays, lectures, travel, discussion clubs, insistence on better radio and television programs—all these have their places. Formal schooling is not ruled out: there are adult classes in the evening or on Saturday, summer courses, even perhaps a sabbatic year devoted to advanced study in one's favorite field. Perhaps some avocation—or call it a hobby: collecting, research, poetry without thought of publication. Gentlemen of the old schools, in the evening of their days, used to translate Horace or Heine; half a century ago, several tried their hands at José Maria de Hérédia's *Trophies.* Sunday painters, like Churchill and Eisenhower, have the most fun. Some may turn into a Rousseau or a Gauguin. Sea captains, engineers, architects, lawyers and particularly doctors have become very successful novelists. The insurance business has given us Wallace Stevens, and banking T. S. Eliot.

So the technicians need not, after sixteen or eighteen, be hopelessly cut off from humanistic interests; and they will not if their high school course has qualified them as humanists. I have found scientific minds—doctors and mathematicians particularly—who were more vitally interested in the arts, literature, philosophy, re-

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ligion, than many a dry-as-dust *Fachmann*. There would be no objection to cultural courses being offered in the highest technical schools: Stanford has announced such a program for its renovated and greatly expanded Medical Center. M.I.T. and Cal Tech have long had outstanding men in the humanities. What is more essential than formal teaching, however, is that the technicians be made aware of the human, the humane, the humanistic aspects of their profession, their psychological, social, aesthetic, ethical, and, I do not blush to say, their spiritual side. This is inevitable for any doctor or lawyer worth his salt. It should be as clear a duty for business executives. It may be very well to read Zola's *Germinal*, Hauptmann's *The Weavers*, Galsworthy's *Strife*: it would be even better to consider a strike *sub specie humanitatis*. Engineers and physicists are waking up to a sense of their duty—and of their opportunity. They are no longer satisfied to be cogs in a masterpiece of cybernetics to be used by such Big Brothers as Hitler, Stalin or . . . (insert the name of your pet American *bête noire*). I do not want technicians *as such* to rule the world: the warnings of Ernest Renan and Aldous Huxley have not passed unheeded. I want them, *as humanists*, to think, speak and act. And the need for such thought, speech and action is tragically pressing.

Many of my fellow humanists, in the ancient academic sense of the term, will be horrified by my ruthless hacking at the subjects they cherish, and by which they earn their modest pittance. What! Minimize cultural erudition in the secondary schools, and practically rule it out of higher education? Ichabod! No more Hellenists, no more Latinists, no more Anglo-Saxon authorities, no more ripe and mellow scholars who know by heart every line Traherne ever penned!

Again, what I have to offer is not suicide, but liberation. I believe in learning, although it is not the center of life. But I want to free learning, by which I mean original and profound scholarship, from the incubus of elementary teaching. The cause of Latin is not well served when a man spends a lifetime drilling declensions into reluctant teen-agers' heads. Classical and historical studies, at the highest level, will survive on the same footing as Egyptology, As-

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syriology, Sanskrit, Sinology today. There will be fewer men and women in the field: teachers of elementary Greek and Latin should be able to shift easily to humanism in the wider sense. But those few will be devoted, working for the truth, not for moldy bread; they will not be imposing the rudiments upon the hapless young, but comparing notes with their peers. Instead of crude little Latinists in Middletown high schools, we shall have in this country a few institutes of Latin studies, all affiliated with a central academy in Rome. These institutes would be "countries of the mind," and truly supernational. They might use for their transactions the language they are studying—Greek, Aramaic or Pali. (In the case of Etruscan, however, it might be safer to adopt Esperanto or Interlingua.)

Would advance scholarship, like the upper reaches of science, turn into a very exclusive club? At first thought, we shudder: would not that cut off from humanity at large those very men who, only yesterday, thought of themselves as *the* humanists par excellence? Some may find stoic pride in such aloofness; some may feel the deathly chill. Did Newton suffer at times from this lack of human contact when "voyaging through strange seas of thought alone"? And perhaps Einstein, a friendly soul, may have felt in the marrow of his bones the icy solitude of the summits.

The danger, however, is slight. Nothing prevents scholars or scientists from being human when off duty: I, a Common Man, have chatted on easy terms with Nobel Prize winners. But even in their own line of work, they need not be hopelessly out of touch with *Homo Simplex* and *Homo Faber*. Renan was first of all a master of Semitic philology. He considered his *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum* as the most valuable of his works. That did not prevent him from writing his *Life of Jesus*, which became at once a best seller. People read it breathlessly, anxious "to find out how it would end." Later, he gave delightful reminiscences, philosophical dialogues and dramas, miscellaneous essays and addresses: all masterpieces of concealed learning and subtle irony, but accessible to the Gentle Reader. Joseph Bédier was a great medievalist: but he wrote a modern synthetic version of *Tristan and Isolde*

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that caught the fancy of the general public. For twenty-five years, Marguerite Yourcenar had followed the arduous path of pure scholarship: then came *Hadrian's Memoirs,* which, without any concession to mere popularity, achieved the most flattering popular success. The Dead Sea scrolls were a find that could be deciphered, organized and translated only by men thoroughly versed in the most esoteric Semitic research. But a true humanist, Edmund Wilson, was found to serve as an interpreter, an apostle to the Gentiles or Middle-Brows. If all are trained as true humanists in the high school, the loftiest scholars will not lose contact, direct or indirect, with the Common Man. Wisdom, learning and humanity must not be severed.

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Insects in the Diet

MARSTON BATES

AMERICAN FOOD HABITS ARE CHANGING. The popularity of pizza is apt to be cited as obvious proof. But there is better proof in the amazing diversity of things offered for sale in any supermarket, and in the text of any cookbook today compared with one published a few years ago. The gourmet may well feel that we still have a long way to go, but no one would argue that we are not moving.

In our household, I am left in complete command of one department—the things to eat with drinks. In the store where I do most of the buying, there is a wonderful assortment of temptations: fish eggs of many kinds other than the authentic but impossibly expensive caviar; fish themselves of many species, prepared in many ways; a wide range of cheeses and sausages, of crispy fried things, of olives and nuts and minced clams and smoked oysters. Lately several kinds of insects have appeared on the shelves—canned ants and silkworm pupae from Japan, maguey worms from Mexico, fried grasshoppers—the can doesn't say where they are from. Insects are an important element in human diet in many parts of the world, but they have long been taboo in European civilizations. It is possible that they will get back into the Western diet by way of the cocktail hour.

It is difficult to understand this prejudice against eating insects. It does not ban all invertebrate animals, for we eat oysters, clams, snails, squid, octopus. We eat lobsters, crabs and shrimp, too, which belong to the same general animal phylum as the insects. It is true that all of these are not eaten by everyone, and that some people will eat none of them. But they are rather generally accepted—snails, squid and octopus less than the others.

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The only thing I can figure out is that we are reluctant to eat invertebrates that live on dry land. Maybe the sea is remote enough from our everyday lives so that it seems all right to eat things that come from there. In support of this, we have the attitude of the people of Florida toward land crabs. Land crabs abound there and they are, I know, good to eat; but local people shudder when you suggest this. Yet the same people eat crabs from the sea readily enough. This is a North American peculiarity. The Puerto Ricans eat their land crabs, and so do most tropical peoples. There is further support for my theory in the American attitude toward snails—we haven't really accepted these land-living mollusks in the way we have those from the sea.

There is one striking exception to the Western refusal of insects as food—honey. To be sure, honey is not an insect, but it is an insect product, and a very intimate product at that, for the bees have to carry the nectar home in their crops to regurgitate it into the honeycomb.

Honey is an ancient human food. One of the famous paleolithic cave paintings clearly shows a man climbing down a rope ladder on a cliff to rob a nest of wild bees—a method of honey collecting still followed by the Vedda tribes of India. Bees, hives and honey are represented on the earliest Egyptian monuments, and the nectar and ambrosia of the Greek gods were both based on honey. The nectar of the gods was mead—a fermented mixture of honey and water, which bee enthusiasts claim is the oldest of man's fermented drinks. Ambrosia, according to Robert Graves, was a fivefold mixture of oil, wine, honey, chopped cheese and meal.

Honey, particularly in the Bible, is often coupled with locusts. Honey is still on our dinner table, but the locusts are not. Yet locusts are eaten in many parts of the world, including the Near East. It is really curious that as food they have become an object of horror in our civilization. Perhaps it is because species of suitable size, taste and abundance do not occur in western Europe or eastern North America. Locusts are specifically permitted in the Jewish dietary laws, as are grasshoppers in general. Leviticus 11:21, in the King James Version, reads: "Yet these may ye eat of every flying creeping thing that goeth upon *all four*, which have legs

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above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth"; and in Verse 22, "*Even* these of them ye may eat; the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind." But all other flying, creeping things are an abomination, as are all things in the water that have neither fins nor scales.

Locusts are also specifically permitted for Muslims. It is said that Mohammed's wives used to send him trays of locusts as presents. There is some difference of opinion about details. It is held in the name of Ahmed that locusts ought not to be eaten if they have died of cold; while the school of Malik holds that they are lawful only if their heads are cut. The majority opinion, however, is that they are lawful under all circumstances, although there is some divergence among Muslim theologians as to whether locusts should be classified as land or sea animals.

There is no religious reason for not eating locusts or grasshoppers in the Christian tradition. We learn from the Gospel according to Matthew that John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, "had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey."

In the strict sense, "locust" is the word for the migratory phase of a grasshopper, *Schistocerca gregaria*, that abounds in the Near East and in north and tropical Africa. It is always present in the fields and grasslands as a solitary insect. Periodically, in remote areas, the numbers of individuals start to build up until the population reaches a fantastic density. Under these crowded conditions, the ordinary "solitary" grasshoppers change into a migratory phase with a slightly different appearance and with an inborn urge to stick together and fly away. The result is the locust plagues of history: vast clouds of them darkening the sky, descending on the fields of grain, the gardens and the orchards of the cultivators, stripping every bit of green, and moving on.

The Greeks, fortunately for the farmers, did not have locusts, but they ate cicadas—quite different insects, although sometimes called locusts in the United States. Aristotle, in his history of animals, noted that the cicada nymphs taste best when they first come out of the ground, just before the final shedding of the skin; but

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he also found the adult males good, and the females even better when, after copulation, they became swollen with eggs. The high-pitched buzzing of the cicadas is a characteristic sound of the Grecian summer—a sacred sound. Plutarch apparently disapproved of eating them because of this. He called the swallow "odious and impious . . . because it . . . kills and devours especially cicadas, which are sacred and musical."

But to get back to grasshoppers: there are several references among Greek historians and geographers to a people called the *Acridophagi*, or grasshopper-eaters. These were a small, black people of Ethiopia. According to Diodorus of Sicily, these people were short-lived because of their grasshopper diet, which caused all sorts of horrid things to breed in their flesh. It is interesting that there are actual cases in modern medical literature of grasshopper-eating Africans who became seriously ill because of intestinal obstruction from the indigestible legs and wings of locusts. This, however, is clearly a consequence of piggishness: the legs and wings are broken off by any civilized locust-eater. A friend of mine, just back from Iraq, remarked upon the crunching sound made by the squashing of discarded locust legs as one walked across a roomful of people eating locust snacks.

Wherever locusts and grasshoppers are common enough to make their collection worth while, they form a part of the diet of primitive peoples. They are especially important in many parts of Africa. The explorers of that continent have described a variety of ways in which grasshoppers may be toasted, fried or boiled. Ground, dried and salted, they may be kept for months, making a food reserve. Grasshoppers were also an important element in the diet for those tribes of North American Indians that lived in regions where swarming species occurred.

Along with honey and locusts, we might well consider manna as an insect product. Dr. F. S. Bodenheimer, professor of zoology at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, who wrote a book entitled *Insects as Human Food*, from which I have culled many facts, has made a special effort to identify the manna of the Bible. Some scholars have thought that this manna was a lichen, *Lecanora esculenta*, which grows on rocks in many parts of the Middle East,

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producing pea-sized fruiting bodies that are prized as sweet delicacies. These fruiting bodies are light enough to be blown about, so that they could conceivably form a manna rain: but it would be a unique event, and the Bible reports a regular appearance of the manna every morning. Furthermore, no one has ever found this lichen growing in the Sinai region.

There are, on the other hand, many reports from travelers in the Sinai region of a manna associated with the tamarisk thickets. This granular, sweet manna appears every year for a period of some weeks in June, although it varies greatly in abundance in different years. It has generally been assumed to be a secretion of the tamarisk itself, but Dr. Bodenheimer, who visited Sinai to study the manna, found that it was the product of two species of scale insects living on the tamarisk. His argument that this insect is the source of the Biblical manna is, for me, convincing.

Many kinds of insects that live by sucking the sap of plants produce sweet secretions. This is especially true of the aphids (plant lice) and scale insects. Ants have learned this, and assiduously cultivate many species of aphids to get the sweets they produce.

The tamarisk manna is a rather special case of the general phenomenon. It corresponds in place with the Biblical account: it is characteristic to this day of the parts of Sinai through which the Exodus occurred. It corresponds also in season. The Israelites first discovered the manna on the fifteenth day of the second month after leaving Egypt, which Dr. Bodenheimer calculates would be about the middle or end of the Sivan, which is late May or early June. Both the Book of Exodus and the Book of Numbers state that the manna fell at night. The scale insects produce their secretion constantly, but it is most apt to accumulate in quantity during the night, when the ants are not carrying it off. This is reflected in our own word "honeydew" and in the "dew of heaven" of other languages.

Moses required the Israelites to eat the manna on gathering it and not to "leave of it till the morning." Exodus 16:20 states that "Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank:

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and Moses was wroth with them." Dr. Bodenheimer notes that the "worms" could easily enough be explained as ants, which are very fond of honeydew and would swarm over it in an open tent. The "stinking" would, in this case, be a later misinterpretation and addition.

Dr. Bodenheimer finds many cases of manna production and utilization in the Middle East, although generally not noticed by European scholars. *Man,* he says, is the common Arabic word both for aphids and for their honeydew, and a *man-es-simma,* or manna from the skies, is often mentioned in Persian and Arabic pharmacopoeias. "We find that manna production," he writes, "is, essentially, a biological phenomenon of dry deserts and mountain steppes. The liquid honeydew excretion . . . speedily solidifies there by rapid evaporation. From remote times the resulting sticky, and often hard or granular, masses have been collected under the name of manna."

The *man-es-simma* of modern Arabic countries comes mostly from the oak forests of Kurdistan, and Dr. Bodenheimer considers that there is not the slightest doubt but that it is the secretion of an aphid, although the species has not been identified. The Iraqi authorities estimate that something like sixty thousand pounds of this manna are sold annually in the markets of Baghdad and other places in the country. It is made into confections, mixed with eggs, almonds and various essences.

The peasants of Kurdistan, who collect the manna from the oak forests in the coldest hours of early morning, believe that it drops from the sky. The manna accumulation depends on favorable weather conditions—no rain and cool winds. The gummy secretion of the innumerable aphids then drops and sticks onto the leaves, branches and soil. Manna-bearing branches are gathered and beaten until the manna drops off. The crystallized substance, mixed with leaf fragments and dirt, is then brought into market and sold to the confectioners. Dr. Bodenheimer had a chemical analysis of the manna made and found that it consisted mostly of a rare disaccharide sugar called trehalose. He reported that confections made out of this manna were "delightful."

The sweet secretions of aphids, scale insects and the like are

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occasionally collected in other parts of the world where species with suitable habits occur, but they are always a rare article of diet, a special delicacy.

After honey and locusts, ants and termites ("white ants") are probably the most common and important insect elements in human diets. Termites and ants are very different kinds of insects, but we are justified in dealing with them together because of their parallel habits. Both are social insects, sometimes forming huge colonies with hundreds of thousands of individuals. Both show "swarming" behavior in that, at certain times of year, the winged sexual forms of a particular species will appear in immense numbers, boiling out of all the colonies in the region at the same time: a ready and tempting food supply for bird, beast or man.

Termites are especially prominent in the diet of many of the peoples of tropical Africa. Travelers, from the time of the early European contacts, have commented on this food, so that there is a considerable literature describing the various ways of collecting and preparing the insects.

Many of the African termites (as well as those of other parts of the tropical world) form large mounds that make striking features of the landscape. These mounds are often staked out as the private property of individuals or groups, and they may be valuable enough to be the cause of fights. Various ingenious traps have been devised to catch the winged sexual forms when they swarm out of the mounds at certain seasons. The sexual forms are generally eaten, but some tribes also eat the worker and soldier forms that can be obtained by breaking into the termite nest. The big, fat termite queens two inches long or so, which live in a special chamber in the depths of the mound where they carry on their eternal task of laying an egg every few seconds, are always considered a great delicacy; but they can only be obtained by destroying the colony.

The Europeans who have been able to bring themselves to try eating the termites have generally reported them as pleasant, or at least unobjectionable. The Africans have a more positive appreciation of the taste of termites. David Livingstone nowhere admits to eating termites himself, but he does report on African opinion.

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"The Bayeiye chief Palani, visiting us while eating, I gave him a piece of bread and preserved apricots; and as he seemed to relish it much, I asked him if he had any food equal to that in his country. 'Ah,' he said, 'did you ever taste white ants?' As I never had, he replied, 'Well, if you had, you could never have desired to eat anything better.' "

Dr. Bodenheimer, with his usual thoroughness, has combed the literature for information on the nutritive value of insects. The results are rather meager, for Western dietitians tend to ignore insects in their nutritional studies. French and Belgian colonial agencies, however, have given some attention to the subject, and it is interesting that termites turn out to be among the richest of all foods in terms of calories, comparable with peanut oil. A Belgian analysis gave a value of 561 calories for 100 grams. This is several times the caloric value of local beef or fish. Apparently no study has been made of the vitamin content of termites.

Ordinary ants (as distinguished from white ants or termites) are also eaten in many parts of the world. The nests may be dug out for larvae, pupae and workers; but most commonly the winged sexual forms are eaten at the times when they swarm. I used to live in a small town in the interior of South America where, at the right season, bags of the toasted sexual forms of the leaf-cutting ants were sold at the movie theater. They had the same quality, and served the same function, as popcorn. The Japanese now export canned fried ants to this country, but these canned ants seem to me quite tasteless, lacking the crisp, toasted quality that I remember from my South American experience.

In the semiarid regions of the southwestern United States and Mexico, and in Australia, there are a number of species of honey ants. Some of the workers in these species convert themselves into living bottles, clinging to the roof of a nest cavity and taking honey from the active workers until their abdomens are completely distended. They thus provide a system of food storage to tide the colony through adverse seasons. The Indians of America and the aborigines of Australia discovered this source of honey and utilized it as fully as they could.

The honey ants were especially important in the meager diet

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of the aboriginal Australians and were sometimes tribal totems. The Australian tribes, in fact, often had insect totems, which shows the importance of insects in their way of life. I have been especially intrigued by the "witchetty grub" people ever since I first came across them in the writings of Sir Baldwin Spencer, the great authority on aboriginal Australian customs. These insect-descended people, with their ceremonies to insure that their totem grubs will flourish and multiply, should have the sympathy of every entomologist.

Unfortunately no one is quite sure what animal the witchetty grub is—the field studies have been made by anthropologists rather than entomologists. Probably "witchetty" is a collective word for the larvae of several of the giant ghost moths that are as characteristic of Australia among the insects as are the kangaroos among the mammals. Large, wood-boring grubs are fancied in many parts of the world, even though they do not play as an important a part in the human diet anywhere else as they do in Australia. Generally they are occasional delicacies.

Among such delicacies in America is the famous maguey worm of the highlands of Mexico. This is the larva of a butterfly, *Aegiale hesperialis*, which bores in the maguey or agave plants—the source of pulque, the national drink of Mexico. The same plant thus supplies the drink and the snack to eat with the drink, and the two have been combined by Mexicans since ancient times.

The maguey worms have been canned for the local market in Mexico for some time, and now they are being imported into the United States by the stores that specialize in fancy foods. The canned worms are best if eaten hot; they have a pleasant, nutty flavor, which blends as well with a martini as with mescal, the potent drink that the Mexicans distill from the fermented pulque. In my home we have been trying these worms on cocktail guests. As yet we haven't found anyone who disliked them, although our guests have shown considerable variation in the degree of their enthusiasm. The worms at least provide a topic of conversation.

From these experiments of ours with guests, I get the idea that while Americans may be prejudiced, they are far from being proud of their prejudices. They want to be broad-minded and tolerant

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and understanding. This is the only conclusion you can draw after watching a lady shut her eyes and open her mouth to take a bite of a worm, and then, after a few moments for recovery, try another worm. The moral seems to be that if the Mexicans eat worms, we should at least be willing to try them. Maybe, then, there is hope for international understanding—or, of course, maybe our guests are unusual people.

In general, attempts to get people to eat insects in Europe and the United States have not met with any success. An Englishman, V. M. Holt, published a small book in 1885, now very rare, entitled *Why Not Eat Insects?* He gave recipes for dishes like curried cockchafers, wasp grubs fried in the comb, new carrots with wireworm sauce, moths sautéed in butter, and cauliflower garnished with caterpillars. But he did not succeed in arousing much enthusiasm.

Entomologists have sometimes experimented with different ways of cooking insects and reported on the results in the entomological journals. During the First World War, the leading American entomologist, L. O. Howard, strongly advocated the use of insects as one way of relieving the food shortage. He and his friends tried various recipes and published their findings in the *Journal of Economic Entomology*. A stew of May beetle grubs was said to "taste agreeably like lobster."

My father-in-law, David Fairchild, famous for his work in introducing new plants into this country and always willing to experiment with new and interesting food, was infected by Howard's enthusiasm. One of my wife's earliest memories is of the time when her father decided the family had better get over prejudice and start eating grasshoppers. He fried the grasshoppers in sugar, but even that did not help with the children. The experiment was not a success, and it took great will power on my wife's part to try eating grasshoppers again. She still does not really like them. The moral, I suppose, is that it is all right to experiment with cocktail guests, but be careful with your children.

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Reformers and Puritans

PHYLLIS McGINLEY

Two Sides of Calvin

I. *Marriage of Convenience*

These are the virtues Calvin thought desirable
In a wife: an even mood,
Chastity, patience, thrift, and an untirable
Solicitude
For her lord's health. Here ends the simple list—
And not one word
Tells us if he admired a delicate wrist
Or much preferred
A hazel eye to brown or amethyst.
What! Had he not some choice
Of statures? Was he not partial in the matter
Of a right female voice,
Desire but silence or a wren-like chatter?
And did not kindness count, or a cool repose?
A cheek of white-and-rose?
Or courtesy? Or wit?

All very well that it should not obtain
If she were fair or plain
(Since by philosophy one must admit,
In this connection,
A woman's flesh is but the spirit's mask)
But ah! not even to ask
That in her breast some taper of affection,
Some flame however decorous and dim
Should burn, and burn especially for him!

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Of Mistress Calvin we know little save
She was eight years a wife,
Well-dowered, also "honorable and grave
And lived a quiet life."
One hopes against hope that she was debonair
And managed to mingle with connubial care
For his dyspepsia, some small tendernesses.
But miracles are rare.
One's better guess is
(And all we have is Calvin's list to go on)
That since he asked, beside a sensible dot,
Only thrift, patience, chastity and so on,
Likely it's what he got.

II. *A Rondeau for Geneva, 1542*

In the City of God with Calvin, king,
The capital virtues had their fling,
But mirth won little or no renown.
A cold decorum, a pious frown
Were proper Burghers' appareling.

Nobody laughed much. None might sing
Or dance to fiddles or kiss-and-cling.
Condemned, together, were lover and clown
In the City of God.

For smiling in church, or slumbering,
For wreathing a Maypole come the Spring,
Jail was the punishment handed down.
One wonders if God, when He walked the town,
Ever felt homesick or anything
In the City of God.

✪ PHYLLIS McGINLEY, a member of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR Editorial Board, is well known for her poetry. The first three poems in this series, "Reformers and Puritans," appeared in the Autumn issue.

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The Populist Heritage and the Intellectual

C. VANN WOODWARD

DURING THE LONG ERA OF THE NEW DEAL one had little difficulty living in comparative congeniality with the Populist heritage. The two periods had much in common, and it was easy to exaggerate their similarities and natural to seek antecedents and analogies in the earlier era. Because of the common setting of severe depression and economic dislocation, Populism seemed even closer to the New Deal than did Progressivism, which had a setting of prosperity. Common to both Populists and New Dealers was an antagonism to the values of the dominant leaders of the business community bordering on alienation. They shared a sense of urgency and an edge of desperation about the demand for reform. And in both, so far as the South and West were concerned, agricultural problems were the most desperate, and agrarian reforms occupied the center of attention. It seemed entirely fitting that Hugo Black of Alabama and Harry Truman of Missouri—politicians whose political style and heritage were strongly Populistic—should lead New Deal reform battles. From many points of view the New Deal was neo-Populism.

The neo-Populism of the present bred a Populistic view of the past. American historiography of the 1930's and 1940's reflects a strong persuasion of this sort. The most popular college textbook in American history was written by a Midwesterner who was friendly to Populism and was himself the foremost historian of the movement. The leading competitor among textbooks shared many of the Populist leanings, even though one of its authors was

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a Harvard patrician and the other a Columbia urbanite. A remarkably heterogeneous assortment struck up congenial ties in the neo-Populist coalition. Small-town Southerners and big-city Northerners, Texas mavericks and Hudson River aristocrats, Chapel Hill liberals and Nashville agrarians were all able to discover some sort of identity in the heritage. The South rediscovered ties with the West, the farmer with labor. The New York-Virginia axis was revived. Jacksonians were found to have urban affiliations and origins. Not to be outdone, the Communists staked out claims to selected Populist heroes.

Many intellectuals made themselves at home in the neo-Populist coalition and embraced the Populist heritage. They had prepared the way for the affiliation in the twenties when they broke with the genteel tradition, adopted the mucker pose, and decided that conventional politics and the two major parties were the province of the boobocracy and that professional politicians were clowns or hypocrites. In the thirties intellectuals made naïve identification with farmers and workers and supported their spokesmen with enthusiasm. The Populist affinity outlasted the New Deal, survived the war, and perhaps found its fullest expression in the spirit of indulgent affection with which intellectuals often supported Harry Truman and his administration.

Hardly had Truman left the White House, however, when the Populist identification fell into disgrace and intellectuals began to repudiate the heritage. "Populist" suddenly became a term of opprobrium, in some circles a pejorative epithet. This resulted from no transfer of affection to Truman's successor, for there was very little of that among intellectuals. It resulted instead from the shock of the encounter with McCarthyism. Liberals and intellectuals bore the brunt of the degrading McCarthyite assault upon standards of decency. They were rightly alarmed and felt themselves betrayed. Something had gone badly wrong. They were the victims of a perversion of the democracy they cherished, a seamy and sinister side of democracy to which they now guiltily realized they had all along tended to turn a blind or indulgent eye. Stung by consciousness of their own negligence or naïveté, they reacted with a healthy impulse to make up for lost time and

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to confront their problem boldly with all the critical resources at their command. The consequence has been a formidable and often valuable corpus of social criticism.

Not one of the critics, not even the most conservative, is prepared to repudiate democracy. There is general agreement that the fault lay in some abuse or perversion of democracy, and was not inherent in democracy itself. All the critics are aware that these abuses and perversions had historic antecedents and had appeared in various guises and with disturbing frequency in national history. These unhappy tendencies are variously described as "mobism," "direct democracy," or "plebiscitarianism," but there is a surprising and apparently spontaneous consensus of preference for "Populism." Although the word is usually capitalized, most of the critics do not limit its reference to the political party that gave currency to the term. While there is general agreement that the essential characteristics designated by the term are best illustrated by an agrarian movement in the last decade of the nineteenth century, some of the critics take the liberty of applying it to movements as early as the Jacksonians, or earlier, and to twentieth-century phenomena as well.

The reasons for this convergence from several angles upon "Populism" as the appropriate designation for an abhorred abuse are not all clear. A few, however, suggest themselves. Populism is generally thought of as an entirely Western affair, Wisconsin as a seedbed of the movement, and Old Bob La Follette as a foremost exponent. None of these assumptions is historically warranted, but it is true that Senator McCarthy came from Wisconsin, that much of his support came from the Middle West, and that there are some similarities between the two movements. The impression of similarity has been enhanced by the historical echo of their own alarm that modern intellectuals have caught in the rather hysterical fright with which Eastern conservatives reacted to Populism in the nineties.

This essay is not concerned with the validity of recent analysis of the "radical right" and its fascistic manifestations in America. It is concerned only with the tendency to identify Populism with these movements and with the implied rejection of the Populist tra-

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dition. It is admittedly very difficult, without risk of misrepresentation and injustice, to generalize about the way in which numerous critics have employed the Populist identification. They differ widely in the meaning they attribute to the term and the importance they attach to the identification. Among the critics are sociologists, political scientists, poets and journalists, as well as historians, and there is naturally a diversity in the degree of historical awareness and competence they command. Among points of view represented are the New Conservative, the New Liberal, the liberal-progressive, the Jewish, the Anglophile, and the urban, with some overlapping. There are no conscious spokesmen of the West or the South, but some are more-or-less conscious representatives of the urban East. Every effort will be made not to attribute to one the views of another.*

Certain concessions are due at the outset. Any fair-minded historian will acknowledge the validity of some of the points scored by the new critics against the Populist tradition and its defenses. It is undoubtedly true that liberal intellectuals have in the past constructed a flattering image of Populism. They have permitted their sympathy with oppressed groups to blind them to the delusions, myths and foibles of the people with whom they sympathized. Sharing certain political and economic doctrines and certain indignations with the Populists, they have attributed to them other values, tastes and principles that the Populists did not actually profess. It was understandably distasteful to dwell upon the irrational or retrograde traits of people who deserved one's sympathy and shared some of one's views. For undertaking this neglected and distasteful task in the spirit of civility and forbearance which, for example, Richard Hofstadter has shown, some of the new critics deserve much credit. All of them concede some measure of value in

* Daniel Bell (ed.), *The New American Right* (Criterion, 1955), especially essays by Richard Hofstadter, Peter Viereck, Talcott Parsons and Seymour Martin Lipset; Edward A. Shils, *The Torment of Secrecy* (Free Press, 1956) and "The Intellectuals and the Powers: Some Perspectives for Comparative Analysis," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* I (October, 1958); Peter Viereck, *The Unadjusted Man* (Beacon, 1956); Oscar Handlin, *Race and Nationality in American Life* (Atlantic-Little, Brown, 1957), and "American Views of the Jews at the Opening of the Twentieth Century," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, no. 40 (June, 1951); Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform* (Knopf, 1955); Victor C. Ferkiss, "Ezra Pound and American Fascism," *Journal of Politics*, XVII (1955); Max Lerner, *America as a Civilization* (Simon & Schuster, 1958).

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the Populist heritage, although none so handsomely as Hofstadter, who assumes that Populism and Progressivism are strongly enough established in our tradition to withstand criticism. Others are prone to make their concessions more perfunctory and to hasten on with the job of heaping upon Populism, as upon a historical scapegoat, all the ills to which democracy is heir.

The danger is that under the concentrated impact of the new criticism the risk is incurred not only of blurring a historical image but of swapping an old stereotype for a new one. The old one sometimes approached the formulation that Populism is the root of all good in democracy, while the new one sometimes suggests that Populism is the root of all evil. Uncritical repetition and occasional exaggeration of the strictures of some of the critics threaten to result in establishing a new maxim in American political thought: *Radix malorum est Populismus.*

Few of the critics engaged in the reassessment of Populism and the analysis of the New American Right would perhaps go quite so far as Peter Viereck, when he writes, "Beneath the sane economic demands of the Populists of 1880-1900 seethed a mania of xenophobia, Jew-baiting, intellectual-baiting, and thought-controlling lynch-spirit." Yet this far from exhausts the list of unhappy or repulsive aberrations of the American spirit that have been attributed to Populism. Other aberrations are not pictured as a "seething mania" by any one critic, but by one or another the Populists are charged with some degree of responsibility for Anglophobia, Negrophobia, isolationism, imperialism, jingoism, paranoidal conspiracy-hunting, anti-Constitutionalism, anti-intellectualism, and the assault upon the right of privacy, among others. The Populist virus is seen as no respecter of the barriers of time or nationality. According to Edward A. Shils, "populism has many faces. Nazi dictatorship had markedly populistic features. . . . Bolshevism has a strand of populism in it too. . . ." And there was among fellow travelers a "populistic predisposition to Stalinism." On the domestic scene the strand of populistic tradition "is so powerful that it influences reactionaries like McCarthy and left-wing radicals and great upperclass personalities like Franklin Roosevelt." And according to Viereck, populistic attitudes once

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"underlay Robespierre's Committee of Public Safety" and later "our neo-Populist Committee on un-American Activities."

Among certain of the critics there is no hesitancy in finding a direct continuity between the nineteenth-century Populists and twentieth-century American fascism and McCarthyism. Victor C. Ferkiss states flatly that "American fascism has its roots in American populism. It pursued the same ends and even used many of the same slogans. Both despaired of achieving a just society under the joined banners of liberalism and capitalism." His assertion supports Viereck's suggestion that "Since the same impulses and resentments inspire the old Populism and the new nationalist right, let us adopt 'neo-Populism' as the proper term for the latter group." Talcott Parsons believes that "The elements of continuity between Western agrarian populism and McCarthyism are not by any means purely fortuitous," and Edward Shils thinks the two are connected by " a straight line." It remained for Viereck to fill in the gap: "The missing link between the Populism of 1880-1900 and the neo-Populism of today—the missing link between Ignatius Donnelly and the McCarthy movement—was Father Charles Coughlin."

There is a strong tendency among the critics not only to identify Populism and the New Radical Right, but to identify both with certain regions, the West and South, and particularly the Middle West. "The areas which produced the populism of the end of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century have continued to produce them," writes Shils. Viereck puts it somewhat more colorfully: "The Bible-belt of Fundamentalism in religion mostly overlapped with the farm-belt of the Populist, Greenback, and other free-silver parties in politics. Both belts were anti-intellectual, anti-aristocratic, anti-capitalist." Talcott Parsons and Ferkiss likewise stress the regional identity of Populist-Radical Right ideology, and Viereck supplies an interesting illustration: "Out of the western Populist movement came such apostles of thought-control and racist bigotry as Tom Watson. . . ."

If so many undesirable traits are conveniently concentrated along geographical lines, it might serve a useful purpose to straighten out the political geography of Populism a bit. In the

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first place, as Hofstadter and other historians of the movement have noted, Populism had negligible appeal in the Middle Western states, and so did the quasi-Populism of William Jennings Bryan. Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois and states east of them went down the line for McKinley, Hanna, gold and the Old Conservatism (and so did Old Bob La Follette). Only in the plains states of the Dakotas, Nebraska and Kansas were there strong Populist leanings, and only they and the mountain states went for Bryan in 1896. At the crest of the Populist wave in 1894 only Nebraska polled a Populist vote comparable in strength to that run up in Alabama, Georgia and North Carolina.

For the dubious distinction of being the leading Populist section, the South is in fact a strong contender; and if the test is merely quasi-Populism, the pre-eminence of the former Confederacy is unchallengeable. It was easily the most solidly Bryan section of the country, and its dogged loyalty far outlasted that of the Nebraskan's native state. But a more important test was third-party Populism, the genuine article. The remarkable strength the Populists manifested in the Lower South was gained against far more formidable obstacles than any ever encountered in the West. For there they daily faced the implacable dogmas of racism, white solidarity, white supremacy and the bloody shirt. There was indeed plenty of "thought control and racist bigotry and lynch-spirit," but the Populists were far more often the victims than the perpetrators. They had to contend regularly with foreclosure of mortgages, discharge from jobs, eviction as tenants, exclusion from church, withholding of credit, boycott, social ostracism and the endlessly reiterated charge of racial disloyalty and sectional disloyalty. Suspicion of loyalty was in fact *the* major psychological problem of the Southern Populists, as much so perhaps as the problem of loyalty faced by radicals of today. They contended also against cynical use of fraud comparable with any used against Reconstruction, methods that included stuffed ballot boxes, packed courts, stacked registration and election boards, and open bribery. They saw election after election stolen from them and heard their opponents boast of the theft. They were victims of mobs and lynchers. Some fifteen Negroes and several white men were killed in the

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Georgia Populist campaign of 1892, and it was rare that a major election in the Lower South came off without casualties.

Having waged their revolt at such great cost, the Southern Populists were far less willing to compromise their principles than were their Western brethren. It was the Western Populists who planned and led the movement to sell out the party to the silverites, and the Southern Populists who fought and resisted the drift to quasi-Populism. The Southerners were consistently more radical, more insistent upon their economic reforms, and more stubbornly unwilling to lose their party identity in the watered-down populism of Bryan than were Western Populists.

There is some lack of understanding about *who* the Southern Populists were for and against, as well as *what* they were for and against. Edward Shils writes that the "economic and political feebleness and pretensions to breeding and culture" of the "older aristocratic ruling class" in the South provided "a fertile ground for populistic denunciation of the upper classes." Actually the Southern Populists directed their rebellion against the newer ruling class, the industrialists and businessmen of the New South instead of the old planters. A few of the quasi-Populists like Ben Tillman did divert resentment to aristocrats like Wade Hampton. But the South was still a more deferential society than the rest of the country, and the Populists were as ready as the railroads and insurance companies to borrow the prestige and name of a great family. The names of the Populist officials in Virginia sounded like a roll call of colonial assemblies or Revolutionary founding fathers: Page, Cocke, Harrison, Beverley, Ruffin. There were none more aristocratic in the Old Dominion. General Robert E. Lee, after the surrender at Appomattox, retired to the ancestral home of Edmund Randolph Cocke after his labors. His host was later Populist candidate for governor of the state. As the editor of their leading paper, the allegedly Anglophobic Populists of Virginia chose Charles H. Pierson, an ordained Anglican priest, English by birth, Cambridge graduate and theological student of Oxford. To be sure, the Populist leaders of Virginia were not typical of the movement in the South. But neither were Jefferson, Madison, Monroe and John Taylor typical of *their* movement in the South: there

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were never enough aristocrats to go around. Some states had to make do with cruder customers as leaders in both Jeffersonian and Populist movements, and in the states to the west there doubtless was less habitual dependence on aristocrats even if they had been more readily available.

In their analysis of the radical right of modern America, the new critics have made use of the concept of "status resentment" as the political motivation of their subjects. They distinguish between "class politics," which has to do with the correction of economic deprivations, and "status politics," which has no definite solutions and no clear-cut legislative program but responds to irrational appeals and vents aggression and resentment for status insecurity upon scapegoats—usually ethnic minorities. Seymour Martin Lipset, who appears at times to include Populism in the category, has outlined the conditions typical of periods when status politics become ascendant. These are, he writes, "periods of prosperity, especially when full employment is accompanied by inflation, and when many individuals are able to improve their economic position." But the conditions under which Populism rose were exactly the opposite: severe depression, critical unemployment and crippling currency contraction, when few were able to improve their economic position—and certainly not farmers in cash-crop staple agriculture.

The Populists may have been bitten by status anxieties, but if so they were certainly not bred of upward social mobility, and probably few by downward mobility either—for the simple reason that there was not much further downward for most Populists to go, and had not been for some time. Populism was hardly "status politics," and I should hesitate to call it "class politics." It was more nearly "interest politics," and more specifically "agricultural interest politics." Whatever concern the farmers might have had for their status was overwhelmed by desperate and immediate economic anxieties. Not only their anxieties but their proposed solutions and remedies were economic. While their legislative program may have been often naïve and inadequate, it was almost obsessively economic and, as political platforms go, little more irrational than the run of the mill.

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Yet one of the most serious charges leveled against the Populists in the reassessment by the new critics is an addiction to just the sort of irrational obsession that is typical of status politics. This is the charge of anti-Semitism. It has been documented most fully by Richard Hofstadter and Oscar Handlin and advanced less critically by others. The prejudice is attributed to characteristic Populist traits—rural provinciality, and ominous credulity and an obsessive fascination with conspiracy. Baffled by the complexities of monetary and banking problems, Populist ideologues simplified them into a rural melodrama with Jewish international bankers as the principal villains. Numerous writings of Western Populists are cited that illustrate the tendency to use Jewish financiers and their race as scapegoats for agrarian resentment. Hofstadter points out that Populist anti-Semitism was entirely verbal and rhetorical and cautions that it can easily be misconstrued and exaggerated. Nevertheless, he is of the opinion "that the Greenback-Populist tradition activated most of what we have of modern popular anti-Semitism in the United States."

In the voluminous literature of the nineties on currency and monetary problems—problems that were much more stressed by silverites and quasi-Populists than by radical Populists—three symbols were repetitively used for the plutocratic adversary. One was institutional, Wall Street; and two were ethnic, the British and Jewish bankers. Wall Street was by far the most popular and has remained so ever since among politicians of agrarian and Populistic tradition. Populist agitators used the ethnic symbols more or less indiscriminately, British along with Jewish, although some of them bore down with peculiar viciousness on the Semitic symbol. As the new critics have pointed out, certain Eastern intellectuals of the patrician sort, such as Henry and Brooks Adams and Henry Cabot Lodge, shared the Populist suspicion and disdain of the plutocracy and likewise shared their rhetorical anti-Semitism. John Higham has called attention to a third anti-Semitic group of the nineties, the poorer classes in urban centers. Their prejudice cannot be described as merely verbal and rhetorical. Populists were not responsible for a protest signed by fourteen Jewish societies in 1899 that "No Jew can go on the street without exposing himself to the

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danger of being pitilessly beaten." That was in Brooklyn. And the mob of 1902 that injured some two hundred people, mostly Jewish, went into action in Lower East Side New York.

Populist anti-Semitism is not to be excused on the ground that it was verbal, nor dismissed because the prejudice received more violent expression in urban quarters. But all would admit that the charge of anti-Semitism has taken on an infinitely more ominous and hideous significance since the Nazi genocide furnaces than it ever had before, at least in Anglo-American society. The Populists' use of the Shylock symbol was not wholly innocent, but they used it as a folk stereotype, and little had happened in the Anglo-Saxon community between the time of Shakespeare and that of the Populists that burdened the latter with additional guilt in repeating the stereotype.

The South, again, was a special instance. Much had happened there to enhance the guilt of racist propaganda and to exacerbate racism. But anti-Semitism was not the trouble, and to stress it in connection with the South of the nineties would be comparable to stressing anti-Negro feeling in the Arab states of the Middle East today. Racism there was, in alarming quantity, but it was directed against another race and it was not merely rhetorical. The Negro suffered far more discrimination and violence than the Jew did in that era or later. Moreover, there was little in the Southern tradition to restrain the political exploitation of anti-Negro prejudice and much more to encourage its use than there was in the American tradition with respect to anti-Semitism. Racism was exploited in the South with fantastic refinements and revolting excesses in the Populist period. Modern students of the dynamics of race prejudice, such as Bruno Bettelheim and Morris Janowitz, find similarities between anti-Negro feelings and anti-Semitism and in the psychological traits of those to whom both appeal. First in the list of those traits under both anti-Negro attitudes and anti-Semitism is "the feeling of deprivation," and another lower in the list but common to both, is "economic apprehensions." The Southern Populists would seem to have constituted the perfect market for Negrophobia.

But perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the whole Populist

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movement was the resistance its leaders in the South put up against racism and racist propaganda and the determined effort they made against incredible odds to win back political rights for the Negroes, to defend those rights against brutal aggression, and to create among their normally anti-Negro following, even temporarily, a spirit of tolerance in which the two races of the South could work together in one party for the achievement of common ends. These efforts included not only the defense of the Negro's right to vote, but also his right to hold office, serve on juries, receive justice in the courts and defense against lynchers. The Populists failed, and some of them turned bitterly against the Negro as the cause of their failure. But in the efforts they made for racial justice and political rights they went further toward extending the Negro political fellowship, recognition and equality than any native white political movement has ever gone before or since in the South. This record is of greater historical significance and deserves more emphasis and attention than any anti-Semitic tendencies the movement manifested in that region or any other. If resistance to racism is the test of acceptability for a place in the American political heritage, Populism would seem to deserve more indulgence at the hands of its critics than it has recently enjoyed.

Two other aspects of the identification between the old Populism and the new radical right require critical modification. Talcott Parsons, Max Lerner and Victor Ferkiss, among others, find that the old regional strongholds of Populism tended to become the strongholds of isolationism in the period between the two world wars and believe there is more than a fortuitous connection between a regional proneness to Populism and isolationism. These and other critics believe also that they discern a logical connection between a regional addiction to Populism in the old days and to McCarthyism in recent times.

In both of these hypotheses the critics have neglected to take into account the experience of the South and mistakenly assumed a strong Populist heritage in the Middle West. One of the strongest centers of Populism, if not the strongest, the South in the foreign policy crisis before the Second World War was the least isolationist and the most internationalist and interventionist part of the

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country. And after the war, according to Nathan Glazer and Seymour Lipset, who base their statement on opinion poll studies, "the South was the most anti-McCarthy section of the country." It is perfectly possible that in rejecting isolationism and McCarthyism the South was "right" for the "wrong" reasons, traditional and historical reasons. V. O. Key has suggested that among the reasons for its position on foreign policy were centuries of dependence on world trade, the absence of any concentration of Irish or Germanic population, and the predominantly British origin of the white population. Any adequate explanation of the South's rejection of McCarthy would be complex, but part of it might be the region's peculiarly rich historical experience with its own assortment of demagogues—Populistic and other varieties—and the consequent acquirement of some degree of sophistication and some minimal standards of decency in the arts of demagoguery. No one has attempted to explain the South's anti-isolationism and anti-McCarthyism by reference to its Populist heritage—and certainly no such explanation is advanced here.

To do justice to the new critique of Populism it should be acknowledged that much of its bill of indictment is justified. It is true that the Populists were a provincial lot and that much of their thinking was provincial. It is true that they took refuge in the agrarian myth, that they denied the commercial character of agricultural enterprise and sometimes dreamed of a Golden Age. In their economic thought they overemphasized the importance of money and oversimplified the nature of their problems by claiming a harmony of interest between farmer and labor, by dividing the world into "producers" and "nonproducers," by reducing all conflict to "just two sides," and by thinking that too many ills and too many remedies of the world were purely legislative. Undoubtedly many of them were fascinated with the notion of conspiracy and advanced conspiratorial theories of history, and some of them were given to apocalyptic premonitions of direful portent.

To place these characteristics in perspective, however, one should inquire how many of them are peculiar to the Populists and how many are shared by the classes or groups or regions or by the period to which the Populists belong. The great majority of Populists were provincial, ill-educated and rural, but so were the

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great majority of Americans in the nineties, Republicans and Democrats as well. They were heirs to all the superstition, folklore and prejudice that is the heritage of the ill-informed. The Populists utilized and institutionalized some of this, but so did their opponents. There were a good many conspiratorial theories and economic nostrums and oversimplifications adrift in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and the Populists had no monopoly of them. They did overemphasize the importance of money, but scarcely more so than did their opponents, the Gold Bugs. The preoccupation with monetary reforms and remedies was a characteristic of the period rather than a peculiarity of the Populists. The genuine Populist, moreover, was more concerned with the "primacy of credit" than with the "primacy of money," and his insistence that the federal government was the only agency powerful enough to provide a solution for the agricultural credit problem proved to be sound. And so did his contention that the banking system was stacked against his interest and that reform in this field was overdue.

The Populist doctrine of a harmony of interest between farmer and labor, between workers and small businessmen, and the alignment of these "producers" against the parasitic "nonproducers," is not without precedent in our political history. Any party that aspires to gain power in America must strive for a coalition of conflicting interest groups. The Populist effort was no more irrational in this respect than was the Whig coalition and many others, including the New Deal coalition.

The political crises of the nineties evoked hysterical responses and apocalyptic delusions in more than one quarter. The excesses of the leaders of a protest movement of provincial, unlettered and angry farmers are actually more excusable and understandable than the rather similar responses of the spokesmen of the educated, successful and privileged classes of the urban East. There would seem to be less excuse for hysteria and conspiratorial obsessions among the latter. One thinks of the *Nation* describing the Sherman Silver Purchase Act as a "socialistic contrivance of gigantic proportions," or of Police Commissioner Theodore Roosevelt declaring in "the greatest soberness" that the Populists were "plotting a social revolution and the subversion of the American Republic"

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and proposing to make an example of twelve of their leaders by "shooting them dead" against a wall. Or there was Joseph H. Choate before the Supreme Court pronouncing the income tax "the beginnings of socialism and communism" and "the destruction of the Constitution itself." For violence of rhetoric *Harper's Weekly*, the New York *Tribune* and the Springfield *Republican* could hold their own with the wool-hat press in the campaign of 1896. Hysteria was not confined to mugwump intellectuals with status problems. Mark Hanna told an assembly of his wealthy friends at the Union League Club they were acting like "a lot of scared hens."

Anarchism was almost as much a conspiracy symbol for conservatives as Wall Street was for the Populists, and conservatives responded to any waving of the symbol even more irrationally, for there was less reality in the menace of anarchism for capitalism. John Hay had a vituperative address called "The Platform of Anarchy" that he used in the campaign of 1896. The Springfield *Republican* called Bryan "the exaltation of anarchy"; Dr. Lyman Abbott labeled Bryanites "the anarchists of the Northwest," and Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst was excited about the menace of "anarchism" in the Democratic platform. It was the Populist sympathizer Governor John Peter Altgeld of Illinois who pardoned the three anarchists of Haymarket, victims of conservative hysteria, and partly corrected the gross miscarriage of justice that had resulted in the hanging of four others. The New York *Times* promptly denounced Governor Altgeld as a secret anarchist himself, and Theodore Roosevelt said that Altgeld would conspire to inaugurate "a red government of lawlessness and dishonesty as fantastic and vicious as the Paris Commune." There was more than a touch of conspiratorial ideology in the desperate conservative reaction to the agrarian revolt. An intensive study of the nineties can hardly fail to leave the impression that this decade had rather more than its share of zaniness and crankiness, and that these qualities were manifested in the higher and middling as well as the lower orders of American society.

Venturing beyond the 1890's and speaking of populists with a small *p*, some of the new critics would suggest that popular protest movements of the populistic style throughout our history have suf-

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fered from a peculiar addiction to scares, scapegoats and conspiratorial notions. It is true that such movements tend to attract the less sophisticated, the people who are likely to succumb to cranks and the appeal of their menaces and conspiratorial obsessions. But before one accepts this as a populistic or radical peculiarity, one should recall that the Jacobin Scare of the 1790's was a Federalist crusade and that the populistic elements of that era were its victims and not its perpetrators. One should remember also that A. Mitchell Palmer and the super-patriots who staged the Great Red Scare of 1919-1920 were not populistic in their outlook. One of the most successful conspiratorial theories of history in American politics was the Great Slave Conspiracy notion advanced by the abolitionists and later incorporated in the Republican Party credo for several decades.

Richard Hofstadter has put his finger on a neglected tendency of some Populists and Progressives as well, the tendency he calls "deconversion from reform to reaction," the tendency to turn cranky, illiberal and sour. This happened with disturbing frequency among leaders as well as followers of Populism. Perhaps the classic example is the Georgia Populist Tom Watson, twice his party's candidate for President and once for Vice-President. When Watson soured he went the whole way. By no means all of the Populist leaders turned sour, but there are several other valid instances. Even more disturbing is the same tendency to turn sour among the old Populist rank and file, to take off after race phobias, religious hatreds and witch hunts. The reasons for this retrograde tendency among reformers to embrace the forces they have spent years in fighting have not been sufficiently investigated. It may be that in some instances the reform movement appeals to personalities with unstable psychological traits. In the case of the Populists, however, it would seem that a very large part of the explanation lies in embittered frustration—repeated and tormenting frustration of both the leaders and the led.

Whatever the explanation, it cannot be denied that some of the offshoots of Populism are less than lovely to contemplate and rather painful to recall. Misshapen and sometimes hideous, they are caricatures of the Populist ideal, although their kinship with the genuine article is undeniable. No one in his right mind can glory

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in their memory, and it would at times be a welcome relief to renounce the whole Populist heritage in order to be rid of the repulsive aftermath. Repudiation of the Populist tradition presents the liberal-minded Southerner in particular with a temptation of no inconsiderable appeal, for it would unburden him of a number of embarrassing associations.

In his study of populist traits in American society, Edward Shils has some perceptive observations on the difficult relations between politicians and intellectuals. He adds a rather wistful footnote: "How painful the American situation looked to our intellectuals when they thought of Great Britain. There the cream of the graduates of the two ancient universities entered the civil service by examinations which were delightfully archaic and which had no trace of spoils patronage about them. . . . Politics, radical politics, conducted in a seemly fashion by the learned and reflective was wonderful. It was an ideal condition which was regretfully recognized as impossible to reproduce in the United States." He himself points out many of the reasons why this is possible in Britain, the most dignified member of the parliamentary fraternity: respect for "betters," mutual trust within the ruling classes, deferential attitudes of working class and middle class, the aura of aristocracy and monarchy that still suffuses the institutions of a government no longer aristocratic, the retention of the status and the symbols of hierarchy despite economic leveling. No wonder that from some points of view, "the British system seemed an intellectual's paradise."

America has it worse—or at least different. The deferential attitude lingers only in the South, and there mainly as a quaint gesture of habit. Respect for "betters" is un-American. Glaring publicity replaces mutual trust as the *modus vivendi* among the political elite. No aura of aristocratic decorum and hierarchal sanctity surrounds our governmental institutions, even the most august of them. Neither Supreme Court nor State Department nor Army is immune from popular assault and the rude hand of suspicion. The sense of institutional identity is weak, and so are institutional loyalties. Avenues between the seats of learning and the seats of power are often blocked by mistrust and mutual embarrassment.

America has no reason to expect that it could bring off a social

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revolution without a breach of decorum or the public peace, nor that the revolutionary party would eventually be led by a graduate of exclusive Winchester and Oxford. American politics are not ordinarily "conducted in a seemly fashion by the learned and reflective." Such success as we have enjoyed in this respect—the instances of the Sage of Monticello and the aristocrat of Hyde Park come to mind—have to be accounted for by a large element of luck. Close investigation of popular upheavals of protest and reform in the political history of the United States has increasingly revealed of late that they have all had their seamy side and their share of the irrational, the zany and the retrograde. A few of the more successful movements have borrowed historical reputability from the memory of the worthies who led them, but others have not been so fortunate either in their leaders or their historians.

One must expect and even hope that there will be future upheavals to shock the seats of power and privilege and furnish the periodic therapy that seems necessary to the health of our democracy. But one cannot expect them to be any more decorous or seemly or rational than their predecessors. One can reasonably hope, however, that they will not all fall under the sway of the Huey Longs and Father Coughlins who will be ready to take charge. Nor need they if the tradition is maintained which enabled a Henry George to place himself in the vanguard of the antimonopoly movement in his day, which encouraged a Henry Demarest Lloyd to labor valiantly to shape the course of Populism, or which prompted an Upton Sinclair to try to make sense of a rag-tag-and-bob-tail aberration in California.

For the tradition to endure, for the way to remain open, however, the intellectual must not be alienated from the sources of revolt. It was one of the glories of the New Deal that it won the support of the intellectual and one of the tragedies of Populism that it did not. The intellectual must resist the impulse to identify all the irrational and evil forces he detests with such movements because some of them, or the aftermath or epigone of some of them, have proved so utterly repulsive. He will learn all he can from the new criticism about the irrational and illiberal side of Populism and other reform movements, but he cannot afford to repudiate the heritage.

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In Search of the Beast

STANLEY J. ROWLAND, JR.

Go praise your April, June, your festal
Noon of high July, go lover
To maidens careless-warm, the natal
Impulse of the year; but I

Am loose beneath the winter sky
To track the beast that prints the cover
Of windy white where vultures cry,
Trees stand like lines in Dante's Hell

And growls from ruined bushes tell
That she of noon now rides a broom.
Oh, once I loved her only, and well
I know: I almost died of gout,

But rose to curse a prayer and shout
Old bones to dying year. The moon
Lit pilgrim paths for me, turned lout
Of cunning mind and ragged clothes

Who tracks the greedy beast that goes
Before like shifting shadow—I heard
It double back across the snows
Beyond my reach, but strewing near

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The shards of men. Yet I don't fear
For I've survived somehow, absurd
As lily that toils nor spins. The year
Will turn upon this hunt and bring

The final solstice of the spring.
For I shall find the beast that ravins
Man, shall track the fields and sing
Old hunting songs in icy caverns;
By God, I'll hunt the beast to lair
And face my own reflection there.

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The Crisis in Language Training

JACOB ORNSTEIN

SHORTLY AFTER THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR John Adams, in a letter addressed to the Treasury Board from Paris, observed: "I found myself in France ill-versed in the Language, the Literature, the Laws, Customs and Manners of the country and had the mortification to find my colleagues little better informed than myself, vain as this may seem." Referring to Benjamin Franklin, Adams noted that he "spoke the language imperfectly and was able to write bad French." Thus, even during the cradle days of the Republic, Americans suffered from a language deficiency in dealing with people of other nations.

This chronic malady has not been improved by time; if anything, the situation has worsened. As the United States has grown and adopted an increasingly important role in international affairs, the inability to communicate in anything but English has handicapped us in both war and peace. Proof of this may be culled almost at random. Shortly after the Normandy landings in the Second World War, a careful screening of some 100,000 troops failed to produce more than twenty men capable of satisfactorily translating a French newspaper editorial or of speaking the language well enough to discuss operations with port and civic authorities.

The cessation of hostilities did not terminate our linguistic crisis. In the position of Free World leadership, we continue to find a lack of languages to be a constant stumbling block in our efforts to communicate with other nations and to understand them. A story from Indonesia illustrates very clearly the wages of monolingualism. When that state was established we had no personnel

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trained in the language of the country, and our embassy was obliged to rely on local help. Out of a misguided sense of loyalty to their employers, the native translators interpreted everything to sound favorable to America. When the State Department was able to send to Jakarta officers who could read newspapers and attend sessions of the legislature, it was found that Indonesia was in the grip of an intense wave of anti-American sentiment.

When so much emphasis is being placed on "person-to-person" diplomacy in the ideological struggle between East and West, our unilingualism contrasts sharply with the linguistic versatility of other peoples. The Soviets, for example, have made it perfectly clear that they consider language training to be no less important than science and technology. It is little wonder that their overseas personnel have amazed even such polyglots as the Swiss and the Danes by their ability to handle languages.

When the state of Libya was established a few years ago, the Russians immediately dispatched a mission of fifteen Arabic-speaking diplomats to that Middle Eastern land. The United States had only one Arabic linguist, who was soon afterward reassigned to a post outside the Moslem world. The Soviets insist that their foreign representatives acquire the language of the country for which they are bound, as well as one or two useful secondary tongues, before they ever set foot on its soil.

By painful contrast, perhaps one in thirty of America's overseas representatives can speak fluently the languages of the countries to which they are sent. The late Secretary of State Dulles, testifying before the Eighty-fifth Congress two years ago, pointed out that less than one-half of our foreign service officers have a practical speaking and reading knowledge of any foreign tongue, and that no more than one-fourth of the incoming trainees could function at all in any language other than English. How well can the message of democracy be carried by persons unable to communicate in anything but English?

It is not only in diplomatic and military affairs that our traditional linguistic ignorance is costly. The task of keeping abreast of scientific, technological and intellectual developments abroad

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becomes more staggering with the general increase in literacy throughout the world. It is not surprising that many otherwise well-informed Americans were profoundly shocked, in the wake of Sputnik I, to find that of the 1,200 or so Soviet scientific publications that we receive, less than 50 were until 1957 regularly translated and analyzed. The American scientist who can read Russian is almost as rare as the whooping crane. And yet, in a survey that I made, published in March of 1957 by the State Department External Research Staff, it was found that only 165 of our 1,800 colleges even taught Russian—and this to a mere 5,000 students. This number, of course, is insignificant when compared with the estimated ten million Russians of all ages who today are studying English.

Just why do Americans so persistently remain unilingual? Although it is currently fashionable to hold the educational system responsible for all that ails us as a nation, the entire blame cannot be placed at the doorstep of the American schools. The peculiar features of our historical and cultural development also contribute to making us linguistically monolithic.

Geography has played its part in conditioning us against foreign language study. There are few lands where one can travel over 3,000 miles without needing to switch languages. Another factor is that until recently America was a pioneer country, more concerned with domestic building than with involvement in international affairs. Our tendency toward isolationism, abetted by the feeling of security provided by our ocean frontiers, bloomed into outright xenophobia in the years immediately following the First World War. Twenty-two states actually passed legislation hostile to language study. The political mood that obtained in the interwar period was anything but propitious to training in foreign tongues.

Moreover, the inimical attitudes of an influential segment of educational theorists and administrators have also tended to minimize the role of language in our schools. The "pragmatists" regarded the study of foreign tongues as a useless frill for most young Americans, who, they argued, would never have use for them. In

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school after school the language requirement was either removed or watered down to insignificant proportions. The few students interested in specializing in this subject were often urged—as was this writer—to transfer to some other field that was more respected and better rewarded.

It is not surprising, therefore, that on the eve of the Second World War language study in America was at its lowest point. The college graduate who was able to order a meal in a foreign language, much less read a book of essays, was a rarity. Unilingualism became, as it were, a way of life, entrenched in all strata of American society. Not only the average citizen but also our intellectual elite came to adopt the hapless philosophy of "Let Them Learn English."

The distinguished French scholar and writer Henri Peyre, of Yale University, has commented aptly on the harm caused by the monolingualism of the American intelligentsia: "Americans have taken refuge, in the easy but paralyzing prejudice—totally groundless in fact—that they are not gifted for languages. . . . They have been afflicted by shyness when confronted by the need to master another tongue and have cultivated inhibitions which a little courage would soon dispel. American scientists, scholars and diplomats have thus done incalculable damage to the prestige of their country abroad, through their placid assumption that everyone should understand English."

The bitter linguistic lesson of the Second World War revitalized the study of foreign tongues, and the past fifteen years have been heartening. Many educators have recanted their "errors" regarding the value of linguistic study. The great universities, such as Harvard, Yale, California, Columbia and Indiana, have not only added important languages to their curricula, but also "area programs" devoted to the historical, economic and sociological backgrounds of the Far East, Near East, Soviet Orbit and Africa. Other schools have sought to improve language instruction by building special language laboratories and experimenting with new techniques. The government and the armed services have established special schools that provide training in over thirty Occidental and Oriental tongues.

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Despite these welcome developments, we are today still failing to meet all but a fraction of our language needs. The National Registration of the Humanities, carried out in 1953 by the American Council of Learned Societies at the request of the Department of Defense, identified only one person with a thorough knowledge of the Thai tongue, and only three who knew Burmese. With other Eastern and African languages the situation was hardly better. A comprehensive report issued in 1953 by the Conference on Asian Affairs pointed out that 40 per cent of our colleges still provide no courses of any kind dealing with the Near and Far East.

The findings of a four-year study undertaken by the Modern Language Association of America with Rockefeller funds constitute a further commentary on the plight of language in American schools, even after the mild boom witnessed in the postwar years. It was learned, for example, that while in 1914, 45 per cent of high school students were enrolled in modern language courses, as late as 1954-55 there were barely 15 per cent. Worse than that, over half of the nation's high schools do not offer a modern language—even to students eager to enroll in such courses.

At the college level the situation is no better. It is a fact that three-quarters of the world's population speak languages taught little or not at all in our colleges: Hindi, the tongue of 150 million is offered at only six universities; Chinese, the official language of 650 million, is offered at only 35 colleges; Arabic, linguistic key to the entire Middle East, is studied by hardly more than 150 students in all our higher institutions.

Another defect in our language program is the traditional failure to begin instruction early; in no other land is the introduction of a new tongue so long deferred as in the United States. And yet the evidence of linguistic, psychological and physiological research shows irrefutably that the ideal time to initiate an individual into the mysteries of language is before adolescence. Dr. Wilder Penfield, director of the Montreal Neurological Institute, speaking before the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1953, commented: "One who is mindful of the changing physiology of the human brain might marvel at our educational curricula. Why should

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foreign languages (dead or alive) make their first appearance long after a boy or girl has lost full capacity for foreign languages?" Although the movement to introduce foreign tongues in the grade schools is growing, with some 300,000 youngsters involved, less than one child in a hundred has the opportunity to undertake foreign language study during this receptive learning period.

This generally dismal picture is relieved by a few bright spots here and there. The Eighty-fifth Congress passed the National Defense Education Act, which authorizes a total of $887,000,000 to be utilized for a four-year program of development of science, mathematics and language training. Moreover, a number of conferences have been called recently at which national leaders in many fields have tried to come to grips with our nation's language deficiencies.

In the final analysis, however, the solution to our foreign language problem does not lie in the calling of high-sounding conferences or the appropriation of large sums by Congress for "crash programs," no matter how meritorious. What is needed is a complete overhauling of our antiquated language teaching system—or lack of system—and its replacement by facilities suited to twentieth-century needs. This means a program in which both the quality and quantity of language instruction would be vastly improved. It would require the introduction of a modern language in the elementary school and its continuation for from six to ten years—through high school and part of college. Every youngster of average intelligence would thus be assured of a reading, writing and speaking knowledge of at least one foreign language by the time he is graduated from high school. College programs would then be able to provide advanced training and specialized study. There is nothing visionary about such an objective when one considers that many smaller and less prosperous nations succeed in equipping their young people with not one but several languages.

Old-fashioned teaching methods that have made language study anathema to generations of young Americans need to be revamped by stressing the actual use of the foreign tongue and making fuller use of modern audio-visual devices. The range of lan-

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guages taught in both high schools and colleges must be expanded to include such major world tongues as Russian, Chinese, Arabic, Hindi and Indonesian.

Language careers need to be made attractive to both teachers and students, through scholarships, travel fellowships and the general improvement of monetary and fringe benefits. Moreover, there is a need for the creation of a national co-ordinating council, composed of government, academic, tourist and business leaders, to give sane direction to our national linguistic effort and to provide a clearinghouse for language problems.

Finally, it is necessary to secure at the grassroots a better understanding of the language problem in its relationship to our international communication needs. A beginning has already been made in mobilizing public sentiment. The United States National Commission for UNESCO, co-operating with the Modern Language Association, has sponsored a series of "citizen consultations" in hundreds of American communities. Armed with the facts and figures presented at these meetings, parents, educators and civic leaders have spearheaded drives to improve language facilities at the local level.

Happily there is today a growing realization that our antediluvian linguistics have no place in the atomic age. Now, while American education is being subjected to a searching scrutiny, is indeed an ideal time for us to mend our linguistic fences. It is even possible that many of the "life adjustment" courses that figure so prominently in school curricula may be replaced by up-to-date offerings that acquaint young Americans not only with foreign tongues but also the backgrounds of the peoples who speak them. If this materializes, there is a real likelihood that Americans may lose the doubtful distinction of being the world's most linguistically limited citizens.

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The Beginning

Lael W. Hill

They weighed me into midwinter at nine pounds—
grown from an April planting
till the stern smack gasped me to breath—
lapped me in flannel soft and warm
(not soft, not warm as the secret cradle
rocked me the slow safe lullaby
while I was becoming myself,
but it must do)

And world's air blossomed into rhythms:
I slept, and sucked,
and poured upon the world
my moment's need or fury.

My mother, lying in lace cap and frills
in a borrowed bed,
lay smiling and weeping
at being no longer two—
yet bound through all years now
by a cord that cannot be cut;

My father, newly home from wars
he never quite attained,
came with less than military mien
to the battle of making-ends-meet,
not yet aware this other war was waiting,
though the woodpile dwindled
and outside the window a lean cat prowled.

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Indoors, in a Franklin glow
my father and mother lifted me to love—
primitive, wrinkled, soft-skulled product
of their living;

And on the square my day was numbered
they crayoned red a circle,
setting the day apart from winter
as I was shawled from crusting wind
or the bright daggers' dangle down the roof,
bringing me into the reckoning of time
as time had brought me to birth
in all my questions.

Winter is not forever, I would learn;
I would remember green
feathering wind from lawn and lilac tree,
find mouths of love sweeter than milk or a thumb,
and leaf-scuffed Octobers a crying
for all the lost.

But that beginning day, before the years
had stretched and punished, shaped and shaken me,
I dazzled with unfamiliar arms and legs
into a hurt of space—of light—
confusion of bright unfocus—
and the loose ends of noise not yet woven
to words, doors, tables, clocks, water. . . .

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The first bath flowed on me
with amniotic pleasure—
a faint recall of waters not remembered,
of bath and baptism
before the fish walked upland
and breathed a morning—
or, even, the pale pink jelly learned a spine.

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reappraisals

Charles Darwin: Life and Habit

FRANCIS HUXLEY

PART II

"Well may we affirm that every part of the world is habitable!" cried Darwin, after examining the brine lakes of Argentina. To find living things in unlikely places was a passion of his: when anchored off the Cape Verde Islands, he collected some dust that had gathered in the gauze of the wind vane and sent it to Ehrenberg, who discovered in it sixty-seven organic forms of infusoria and plants, to Darwin's delight. On St. Paul's Island, which, except for a crab, apparently supported only the booby and the noddy, he discovered a fly, a tick and a moth, all living in the birds' plumage, a beetle and a woodlouse living beneath the guano, and a spider living on the others. And the unlikely places themselves fascinated him. "In calling up images of the past, I find that the plains of Patagonia frequently cross before my eyes; yet these plains are pronounced by all wretched and useless. They can be described only by negative characters; without habitations, without water, without trees, without mountains, they support merely a few dwarf plants. Why then, and the case is not peculiar to myself, have these arid wastes taken so firm a hold on my memory? . . . I can scarcely analyze these feelings: but it must be partly owing to the free scope given to the imagination. The plains of Patagonia are boundless, for they are scarcely passable, and hence unknown: they bear the stamp of having lasted, as they are now, for ages, and there appears no limit to their duration through future time. If, as the ancients supposed, the flat earth was surrounded by an impassable breadth of water, or by deserts heated to an intolerable excess, who would not look at these last boundaries to man's knowledge with deep but ill-defined sensations?"

The uninhabited tracts of Darwin's mind here found themselves given form and expression: no wonder that their impassability haunted him, since they bounded both his steps and his knowledge. "The limit of man's knowledge in any subject possesses a high interest," he wrote again, "which is perhaps increased by its close neighborhood to the realms of the imagination." His imagination, being formless, was literal; more, it was itself a region of waste, of exceptions and impossibility. Darwin was, we can see, centrally interested in waste, even if we ignore the current psychoanalytical explanations for compulsive collecting: the whole idea of natural selection is based on the realization that wastage is not merely destructive. Exception, too, attracted him, and he made it a rule always to note exceptions to his own theories lest he conveniently forget them. It was from an exception, besides, that he first

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learned the true nature of the scientific process. When he was still a student he learned that a tropical shell had been found in a gravel pit. Full of excitement, he told Sedgwick about the discovery and was much surprised when Sedgwick refused to become at all interested in this exception—for the gravel had a glacial origin—since it would have meant redoing the entire geology of England. Someone, he said, must have recently thrown the shell into the pit. "Nothing before had ever made me thoroughly realize . . . ," wrote Darwin, "that science consists in grouping facts so that general laws or conclusions may be drawn from them." This was undoubtedly a great moment in his life, the activity of his mind finding a method and a purpose at the same time. Impossibility found itself borne down by the combination: "It's dogged as does it," he would exclaim when the solution to some problem continually eluded him. He hankered to give form and order to the facts he collected, hankered to explain the world by means of the evidence provided by its own workings: enigmas and mysteries were to him at once a thrill and an affront. As a young man he was much impressed by an erratic block near Shrewsbury, a countryman having told him that men could try till Doomsday to explain how it got there, and still fail. "So that I felt the keenest delight when I first read of the action of icebergs in transporting boulders, and I gloried in the progress of Geology."

But let us revert to waste, or death, for it introduces another side of Darwin's character. "What a book a devil's chaplain might write on the clumsy, wasteful, blundering, low and horribly cruel works of nature," he once wrote. It seems that he did not feel this horror very often: the spectacle of nature battling with herself excited interest in him rather than pity. Pity, however, he certainly felt from time to time in the form of a romantic guilt, as when he noticed a wasp caught in a spider's web, where it struggled for an hour: so he removed the wasp, killed it and replaced it on the web to see how the spider would deal with it. He felt very badly about killing eight-day chicks—who could "do such a very disagreeable thing as kill babies," he asked Fox in a letter—and he was once struck with horror at the thought he might be eating unborn calf. (It was only puma.) And as for the small armadillo of the pampas, "It seems almost a pity to kill such nice little animals, for as a Gaucho said, while sharpening his knife on the back of one, 'Son tan mansos' (they are so quiet)."

This humaneness in dealing with the brute creation was taught him by the precept and example of his sisters when he was still a child. When he made his first collection of butterflies he was persuaded not to catch live ones, for that would have meant killing them: instead he collected only those he found already dead. Doubtless it was for a similar reason that most of his earliest collections were of inanimate objects such as shells, franks and seals. Later, however, he made a collection of beetles, which he caught alive; in his old age he could remember almost photographically those places where, years before, he had caught particularly fine or rare beetles. His collecting then turned him into a hunter, a trait which, although suppressed at first, later made him a passionate shot. "How I did enjoy shooting! but I think that I must have been half-consciously ashamed of my zeal, for I tried to persuade myself that shooting was almost an intellectual employment. . . ."

What kind of an employment is shooting? It is a way of coming into an almost instantaneous relationship with a thing at a distance—so quickly, indeed, that one's excitement at pulling the trigger seems to be the cause of the bird dropping out of the sky. It is this compounded thrill that Darwin sought so much in his youth, a thrill that was nothing but a way of making himself feel his own being. The necessity of establishing oneself in the world is something common to all children, and it was certainly a problem to Darwin, repressed as he was by sisters and father. What he wanted was life—excitement, encouragement, response. But his sisters told

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him he mustn't, that he could only have life without the excitement, only collect butterflies that were dead. He himself says that he was very passionate when young, and swore like a trooper; his wish for excitement just would not be kept down. There is, besides, this revealing passage in his *Autobiography*: "I beat a puppy, I believe, simply from enjoying the sense of power. . . . This act lay heavily on my conscience, as is shown by my remembering the exact spot where the crime was committed. It probably lay all the heavier from my love of dogs being then, and for a long time afterwards, a passion."

Here then is an echo of Darwin's use of anger as a tonic. But in the beginning it was not so much anger as his energies wanting to make themselves known, a thrill he got in another way by telling what he said were lies. "These lies, when not detected, I presume excited my attention, as I recollect them vividly not connected with shame, though some I do, but as something which by having produced a great effect in my mind, gave pleasure like a tragedy." "To give pleasure like a tragedy"—it is a fine phrase, in which telling lies, being angry, shooting, reading Shakespeare or listening to *The Messiah*, can all be brought together and understood as Darwin's way of stimulating his sleeping energies.

This habit of stimulating himself, it seems, later became mixed up with Darwin's passion for collecting. Thrills and explosions are all very well, but they do not last: the mind, having felt itself act, still needs something substantial to be the proof of that activity. So, shells, franks, seals, beetles: and, when he went out shooting, he made a record of all the birds he killed by tying a knot on a string fastened to his lapel.

That the birds he killed actually died, and that he could only solidify his thrills by collecting lives, so to speak, seems to have been an unfortunate accompaniment to his activity. J. M. Herbert tells an anecdote of Darwin: ". . . when going over some of the ground they had beaten on the day before, he picked up a bird not quite dead, but lingering from a shot it had received on the previous day; and that it had made and left such a painful impression on his mind, that he could not reconcile it to his conscience to continue to derive pleasure from a sport which inflicted such cruel suffering." The pleasurable skill of being a dead shot, however, prevailed despite his conscience, and he only let up on shooting at the end of his *Beagle* days because his other pursuits became more interesting. It was not death he minded, therefore, but accusation: if he could take lives as though he were not really there, he was happy. Perhaps it was for this reason he so enjoyed the memory of killing a fox in Chile, by creeping up behind it and knocking it on the head with his geological hammer.

Darwin's horror of suffering comes out very plainly both in his attitude toward slavery, which he detested—it was the cause of one of his quarrels with Fitz-Roy on the *Beagle*—and in his reactions to operations. Thus he tells us how he fled halfway through the only two operations he ever witnessed (both without anesthetics, it must be stressed, and one upon a child), the two cases haunting him for many years; and that when, as a medical student, he visited the sick, "Some of the cases distressed me a good deal, and I still have vivid pictures before me of some of them. . . ." Even more striking was his reaction to anatomy classes: the sight of a cadaver being dissected caused him such disgust that he was unable to attend, and so he never learned about either anatomy or dissection.

An interesting sidelight on this matter is seen in Darwin's reactions to vultures. He calls them "disgusting" not only in *The Descent of Man*, but also in his journal of the voyage of the *Beagle*, where, of six uses of the word, three apply to vultures. (The word is also used to characterize sea-slugs, native remedies on the pampas, and the town of Pernambuco.) Darwin rationalizes this disgust by pointing with a shudder at the bald heads of vultures—although turkeys do not seem to affect him at all in the same way—but the real cause seems to be

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that vultures are carrion-feeders and, beakful by beakful, cut up the dead much as medical students do in dissecting cadavers.

When death did not groan in his face, therefore, Darwin could look at it quite happily. "It is a bitter and humiliating thing to see works, which have cost man so much time and labor, overthrown in one minute; yet compassion for the inhabitants was almost instantly banished, by the surprise in seeing a state of things produced in a moment of time, which one was accustomed to attribute to a succession of ages. In my opinion, we have scarcely beheld, since leaving England, any sight so deeply interesting," he wrote of an earthquake in his Journal. In the pampas, he views the innumerable bones, whole or broken, that are to be found there, with a certain triumphant dispassionateness, as illustrating an interesting biological point; in the same way he can agree with the remark made by a Dr. Smith, that the carnage caused by lions in South Africa must indeed be terrific, needing only to comment upon this with an exclamation mark. His pleasure in arousing astonishment by horrific facts comes out well when he describes how the Indians of the Argentine are slaughtered: "This is a dark picture; but how much more shocking is the unquestionable fact, that all the women who appear above twenty years old are massacred in cold blood! When I exclaimed that this appeared rather inhuman, he [a Gaucho] answered, 'Why, what can be done? they breed so!' "

Darwin on his journey around the world writes of himself as a mark for astonishment almost as often as a scientific observer. Novelties overwhelm him: the word *novel* indeed recurs constantly throughout his Journal, together with such words as *astonish, curious, remarkable* and *singular*. "In England any person fond of natural history enjoys in his walks a great advantage, by always having something to attract his attention; but in these fertile climates, teeming with life, the attractions are so numerous, that he is scarcely able to walk at all." Dear Darwin! The thrill of wonder often stopped him dead, and he expressed his feelings at those times by a great number of rhetorical exclamations and questions. His reactions to wonder and astonishment went back to his pleasure in telling lies or tall tales when a child, in order to "cause excitement." But he did not let the excitement get the better of him, for although he would usually speculate upon the astonishing thing, he would often admit that "I do not know," "I am quite ignorant," "I cannot form a conjecture" of what it was all about.

The lives and novelties Darwin collected were thus somewhat impersonal; and death, too, was impersonal, striking down this or that individual by chance and not on purpose—not, that is to say, on the purpose of anything outside the actual situation. The situation breeds its own purpose, and death is a secondary consequence of this. Darwin was not good at dealing with psychological purpose, as can be seen from his reactions to the Fuegian Indians. He was excessively astonished when he first saw them: "One can hardly make oneself believe that they are fellow-creatures, and inhabitants of the same world." They were indeed such appalling and insistent savages that he felt himself at a real disadvantage, for, as he said, they had not the least idea of firearms, but crowded upon him with threats and demands and barbaric curiosity. When he at last returned to the ship, "I was amused at finding what a difference the circumstance of being quite superior in force made, in the interest of beholding these savages." Indeed, his encounter with the Fuegians proved to be one of the times he was really stirred, for he could hardly keep off the subject. Thirty-five years later, in *The Descent of Man,* he wrote: "The astonishment which I felt on first seeing a party of Fuegians on a wild and broken shore will never be forgotten by me, for the reflection at once rushed into my mind—such were our ancestors. . . . He who has seen a savage in his native land will not feel much shame, if forced to acknowledge that the blood of some more humble creature flows in his veins. For my own part I

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would as soon be descended from that heroic little monkey, who braved his dreaded enemy in order to save the life of his keeper, or from that old baboon, who descending from the mountains, carried away in triumph his young comrade from a crowd of astonished dogs—as from a savage who delights to torture his enemies, offers up bloody sacrifices, practices infanticide without remorse, treats his wives like slaves, knows no decency, and is haunted by the grossest superstitions." The contrast between the savage and the baboon is well summed up in that word *decency*. To be decent is to have a simple but courageous sense of honor, like the baboon and like Darwin himself; the savage, on the other hand, will not keep his distance, advancing his passions and his pretensions at the same time as his physical presence. Against such an approach Darwin's trust in decency could offer little defense.

"His was a world of insects and pigeons, apes and curious plants, but man as he exists had no place in it," a contemporary journalist wrote of Darwin. He had indeed a great feeling for plants, almost equal to his early passion for beetles. "It has always pleased me to exalt plants in the scale of organized beings," he wrote—no doubt one reason he took such delight in the sundew and in climbers. But plants also provided him with his first illuminating image when he came to think about the origin of the species: "All animals of same species are bound together just like buds of plants, which die at one time, though produced either sooner or later. Prove animals like plants. . . ."

This is an astonishing remark, and to be produced it had to spring as much from Darwin's weaknesses as his strengths. Examining it, one sees that the whole force of emotional thinking is opposed to it, and that previous evolutionary theorists would have found it incomprehensible. It shows, besides, just how much Darwin's way of thinking differed from that popularly known as Lamarckism. The theory of willed development, which is Lamarckism in its most absurd and exaggerated form, cannot account for the structure of plants, however hard one tries to give life a purely animal and conscious quality. Darwin, reversing the entire issue, made animals like plants and saw them as dying—rather than willing—their way to success. How was this?

"They die, without they change, like golden pippins; it is a *generation of species* like generation *of individuals*." Darwin always came back to the individual, though in a quite impersonal way; he saw that the species was not an ideal type but was composed of a limited number of individuals, none of them quite the same, continually succeeding each other in time and being acted on from the outside. That the individual members of a species lived or died interested him only because it was through their lives that the endlessly repeated cause was able to act, whose effect was the changing species itself—the species being the expression of a state of balance and adaptation, and not one of planned design.

Darwin, of course, is a study in balance. He balanced himself in a lengthy and roundabout way, the slightest disturbance at one place producing a wholesale rearrangement everywhere else, until some kind of stasis was resumed. For he could never let go of anything: what he read or observed stayed in his mind until he could find some place for it. This tenacity has a certain vegetative quality in itself, to go with Darwin's other interests: unlike an animal, centered upon its own desires, Darwin's mind gathered around the facts that he planted in it, wherever they might be, and not around the mystery of its own working. Laboriously balancing the facts it contained, it made Darwin look at nature as though it were an example of domestic economy, where the most disparate things come together according to the needs of the moment and not to any abstract principles of classification.

Darwin, I think, might have enjoyed Buddhism, if he could have borne to consider the matter. Thomas Huxley, late in life, came to appreciate the concept of karma, the law of cause and effect which,

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operating in nature, Darwin called natural selection; with his particular cast of mind, however, I cannot imagine that Huxley thought much of the doctrine of the five skandhas. This doctrine says that the ego is nonexistent, and that what seems to be a real and immortal personality is nothing but a bundle of habits, brought together at birth and scattered at death. Darwin, on the other hand, however little he might have enjoyed a personal application of this doctrine, was yet always putting it to work in his writings. That there was an ideal form of nature that continually accused the reality of imperfection was an impossible belief for him; and if there existed perfecting tendencies, or higher destinies in store for man, these were the perfectly plain outcomes of actual situations, the results of a karmic economy.

Now it is easy to see how Darwin's experience as a child may have helped him to this attitude. William Irvine has remarked that Darwin's delight in facts started as a defense against the continual accusations brought against him by his father and his eldest sister (who he thought "too zealous in trying to improve" him). Perhaps his distrust of the ideal and the abstractly systematic had a similar origin. His preoccupations, it must be stressed, were collateral rather than lineal, for his relationship with his father seems effectively to have suppressed any positive feelings of linearity in him and to have encouraged his cousinly, collateral relationship with the Wedgwoods, for example. This same dislike of authority and linearity may be seen in the historical essay he wrote for the *Origin*. There was really no need for him to write it, but if he did, then he should not have treated his predecessors—notably, Lamarck and his own grandfather Erasmus—in so cavalier a fashion. A historical essay should be a way of putting one's own work into perspective, rather than a way of claiming to have done everything by oneself, as Darwin uneasily tried to imply. Yet the need to make such a claim is understandable when one sees how ill at ease he was with his own Author: he was engaged in re-establishing, in himself, a sense of identity and continuity which the life in his family had denied him. That this attempt sometimes went too far, he was at least half aware. "'Here is a good joke," he wrote to Hooker: "H. C. Watson . . . says that in the first four paragraphs of the introduction, the words 'I,' 'me,' 'my,' occur forty-three times! I was dimly conscious of the accursed fact. He says it can be explained phrenologically, which I suppose civilly means, that I am the most egotistically self-sufficient man alive; perhaps so."

Darwin's preference for the collateral over the lineal is shown also in the *Origin*, where he likes to explain how a species originates, not by marking out the course of its descent, but by showing how, between two closely related species, there is no real boundary—a species to him being a seething collection of varying structures, whose melting edges might calve new species, like icebergs. "It is really laughable to see what different ideas are prominent in various naturalists' minds, when they speak of 'species,'" he wrote to Hooker; "in some, resemblance is everything and descent of little weight—in some, resemblance seems to go for nothing, and Creation the reigning idea—in some, descent is the key—in some, sterility an unfailing test, with others it is not worth a farthing. It all comes, I believe, from trying to define the undefinable." A lot of Darwin is the attempt to do the exact opposite, to do away with edges and make the apparently well-defined indefinite, so that "we may be all melted together." "It is funny how each man draws his own imaginary line at which to halt," he wrote of those who boggled over parts of his theory. Darwin's own line was drawn firmly between his search for the truth and his desire to please, which, at any rate in the privacy of his own study, he did not allow to mix; the emotional link which others had between authority, linearity and the fixity of species was, for him, broken.

Yet, although Darwin was so fascinated by the way things grade into each other, he was always interested in the notion of small worlds: of small salt pans, for in-

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stance, set apart from the surrounding pampas, of the pampas itself and its difference from the jungle to the north, and of the whole South American continent and its productions as being a separate biological province. For him the productions of nature were clearly distinguishable spatially, just as they were in time. How can one account for this, if not by a lineal explanation?

Darwin proceeded in an altogether ingenious way. His use of the word *origin* is deceptive, for while he often spoke of a common ancestor, the ancestor is important mainly as the last step in a deductive syllogism. "I am actually weary of telling people that I do not pretend to adduce direct evidence of one species changing into another," he replied to an inquirer, "but that I believe that this view in the main is correct, because so many phenomena can thus be grouped together." Darwin had good reason for not trying to show that one species turns into another: as yet no long fossil series had been discovered to provide such evidence. Even so, one gets the feeling that Darwin found genealogical trees almost as stupefying as metaphysics or the process of erosion, and that when he uses the word *origin* he tends to mean "causes of change" rather than "original model." And the causes of change that he thought important were the simplest, most obvious things: they were the needs of the moment by means of which plants and animals living together in the same habitat could find their true affinity.

In this lay Darwin's genius, that he saw the key to relationship in interaction rather than in descent, and that he understood nature's opportunism. The fact that similar opportunities, in the form of similar habitats, generally produced similar changes in different species, always interested him, although the exceptions interested him even more. He was most interested, however, in another kind of opportunism, which he described by means of a chain argument. Cottagers keep cats that catch mice that eat bumblebees that fertilize clover: such was one chain of opportunity that he saw in an ecological situation. It is the science of The House That Jack Built. Darwin himself realized this when he told Hooker his chain argument for the dispersal of plants: "I find fish will greedily eat seeds of aquatic grasses, and that millet-seed put into fish and given to a stork, and then voided, will germinate. So this is the nursery rhyme of 'this is the stick that beats the pig,' &c., &c."

The nursery rhyme from which Darwin quoted is as long as any of his own chain arguments. The old woman, its heroine, at the end manages to persuade the cat: and

Then the cat began to kill the rat,
The rat began to gnaw the rope,
The rope began to hang the butcher,
The butcher began to kill the ox,
The ox began to drink the water,
The water began to quench the fire,
The fire began to burn the stick,
The stick began to beat the dog,
The dog began to bite the pig,
The pig began to go;
So it's all over, and the old woman's home again now.

Is not natural selection the old woman come home again, the cat having killed the rat; or the battle being lost because the horseshoe fell off? The inequalities mount up, until they come to a head and change the whole system: the things in the system interact with each other, some dying but none changing—the system changes. It is the idea behind a Heath Robinson machine, in which the most unlikely and unsuitable things are pressed into service solely in order that they can pass on, from one to the other, some motion having its designed effect in the far distance. This linking together whatever may be at hand is typical of Darwin not only in his descriptions of ecological processes, but in his theorizing, which is often advanced by the most extensive of chain arguments: *The Descent of Man,* for instance, is a vast chain of parallelisms buttressed by collateral chains of reasoning in other spheres. (Discussing the idea that the races of man are all related, for example, he includes as an argument in favor that both dogs and monkeys are able to reason.) And though

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The Origin of Species is much better as a theoretical work, even Thomas Huxley confessed that it was the most difficult book to master that he knew: and this is because Darwin requires one to pay attention not only to what he is saying at the moment, but to the whole chain of his argument as he pursues it through facts, deductions, speculations, apologies, parallels and justifications. Yet at bottom the argument is curiously simple. "It is interesting to contemplate a tangled bank, clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent upon each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us."

It is odd, at first sight, that all this should have proved so incomprehensible to Darwin's contemporaries: the laws of inheritance, of variation, of geographical isolation, of the Malthusian effects of overpopulation, and of ecology are all simple enough. What caused the trouble, it seems, was the most commonsensical of those laws through which, despite its lack of scholastic principle, all the others became actual: the ecological law, which relates unlike things through their interdependent actions. That unlike things have anything in common is a difficult idea to get across, a difficulty that led Herschel, for one, to dismiss natural selection as "the law of higgledy-piggledy": he, no doubt, would have preferred to explain existence teleologically, in terms of a thing's likeness to itself. It is here, perhaps, that one reaches both the crux of the Darwinian argument and of Darwin's habit of mind. The difficulty in thinking about phenomena in time is to know whether to emphasize their continuity or their discontinuity—whether to think in terms of purpose or of determinants. Darwin avoided the dilemma by bringing purpose and determinism together under the guise of habit, which to him was really another name for nature: "Nature, by making habit omnipotent, and its effects hereditary, has fitted the Fuegian to the climate and the productions of his miserable country," he wrote succinctly. In his eagerness to bring everything down to habit, he sometimes comes close to equating habit to matter—his book *The Expression of the Emotions,* in which he showed what good reasons there were for screwing up one's eyes when in a rage, or for lifting the corners of the mouth in a smile, is a fine example of how far this approach will go. His view of what a habit was, however, was general enough for him to fit in purpose when he had to. Thus, under pressure from the physicists whose calculations deprived him of all those necessary millions of years he had to have if natural selection were to do its work, he introduced the Lamarckian idea of wants evolving new organs by making themselves felt, and invented pangenesis as a way of making the effect of those wants hereditary.

Pangenesis, for all its failure as a theory, is one of the more Darwinian of Darwin's notions. There is something delightfully touching about the idea of having every cell in the body send its little particle of essence to be formed into the gametes: it reminds one of Darwin's hope that "we may be all melted together." The idea is also interesting in that it emphasizes Darwin's view of an organism as being a bundle of habits and particulars that have come together without the aid of a central organizing force. But its principal interest lies in the way Darwin has tried to make particulars form a continuum. Darwin may have always preferred to deal with particulars, but this does not mean that he was especially interested in the numerical. On the contrary, it is no accident that his interest in particulars should have broken down, when he was dealing with heredity, just at the place where particulars become continuous through a mathematical treatment. That things occurred in numbers was, one suspects, too obvious a fact for Darwin to bother much about, except in a crude way. He preferred to read meanings into particulars as would a physiognomist, rather than a statistician—a preference

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shared by Francis Galton, the inventor of biometrics.

If Darwin could not think mathematically, on the one hand, one cannot begin to picture on the other what his reactions must have been when asked by Grote's father why he didn't give up all this "fiddle-faddle of geology and zoology, and turn to the occult sciences." The question is interesting: occultism is certainly a theory of the sublime and propounds the potential relationships between the shifting and unborn figures it makes out in that darkness. Yet the question is also majestically inept, for occultism does without material habits, the only things Darwin really considered to be evidence. Matter, in his eyes, far from being directed in its operations by an all-controlling Mind, controlled itself through internal dissimilarities which found their term in an ecological balance. The balance was never perfect, and it was because of this imperfection that matter evolved.

Life feeds on death—this unimpeachable truth had not been put to work systematically before Darwin. "Why does individual die? To perpetuate certain peculiarities (therefore adaptation), and obliterate accidental varieties, and to accommodate itself to change," reads one of Darwin's earliest and somewhat hasty notes on the subject. This is his Grand Idea, which emerged out of the shifting balance he saw in nature and felt in himself, and which in neither place he could fix in terms of final and continuous purpose. The self-continuous, and hence occultism and metaphysics, were matters from which Darwin turned his eyes with great uneasiness, discovering as he did so the Heraclitean principle of continuity through change. "Only the other day I looked forward to this airy barrier as a definite point in our voyage homewards," he wrote of the Antipodes when on the *Beagle*; "but now I find it, and all such resting-places for the imagination, are like shadows, which a man moving onwards cannot catch."

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. . . . . *The Scholar's Scratch Pad* . . . . .

The American Concept of Academic Freedom

HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

It must bewilder academic visitors from abroad to observe how loosely our educational vocabulary is used in the United States. I sometimes think that all our key terms in education are ambiguous. Take, as an illustration, the words we employ to designate the heads of our institutions of higher learning. In this country the head is commonly called a president, but sometimes he is not, and in these cases he may be called a chancellor. Often an American president has one or more chancellors under him, but sometimes a chancellor presides over several presidents. One American university has eight presidents and no chancellor. Many universities have a battery of vice-presidents, most of whom have nothing to do with the educational process. Some universities have a vice-president and also a provost. One or two universities have a vice-chancellor, whose function and dignity, however, in no way resemble the function and dignity of a British vice-chancellor. An academic provost, on the other hand, is a sort of administrative maid-of-all-work, who, far from fulfilling the dictionary definition of the provost as the head of something and therefore an independent, or at least an autonomous, official, is simply a substitute for a head too busy to do all he is supposed to do. To add to the confusion we have colleges in the United States fulfilling all or many of the functions of a university, and we have ambitiously entitled universities what are in fact scarcely good junior colleges. The distribution of academic titles in such institutions makes an interesting subject for speculation.

The term "academic freedom" is obviously a key term in education, one which shares in the general ambiguity. The phrase has not the same significance to Americans that it has in other parts of the world; and perhaps the best way to begin distinguishing its local meaning is to analyze this difference. We have been told many times that the concept of academic freedom, although some of its components go far back in our history, owes much to the admiration of an intellectual minority among us for the nineteenth-century German university. This is true enough, but Americans adopted only part of the German conception.

That conception included two complementary elements: *Lernfreiheit* and *Lehrfreiheit*—freedom of learning and freedom of teaching. On the whole the Americans have not accepted wholeheartedly the idea of *Lernfreiheit*, at least as the Germans defined or understood it; and in our present mood of revulsion from the elective system of undergraduate training we are farther away from the original concept than we were when Eliot was president of Harvard. In their magisterial history of academic

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freedom in the United States, Professors Hofstadter and Metzger describe the *Lernfreiheit* dear to nineteenth-century Germany as "the absence of administrative coercion in the learning situation." The German word, they say, referred to the fact that German students "were free to roam from place to place, sampling academic wares; that wherever they lighted, they were free to determine the choice and sequence of courses, and were responsible to no one for regular attendance; that they were exempted from all tests save the final examination; that they lived in private quarters and controlled their private lives." Even American experimental colleges scarcely go this far, and the common pattern of student life in the United States is rather more restricted than is this description of German student life.

American institutions have had to accept a quality of responsibility for student learning that differs significantly from the old German theory. They have had to do this for at least four important reasons. The first is that in the eyes of the law the school, college or university stands *in loco parentis* with reference to its students, especially if the students are in point of law minors. This means that the college is compelled to accept a parietal responsibility for student welfare unknown to the German system. If the American professor no longer concerns himself with the cow in the belfry or student absence from compulsory chapel, this is principally because he has turned the problem of student behavior over to a dean, proctor, counselor or psychiatrist. But the college is still responsible.

The second reason arises out of the deliberate cultivation by American institutions of learning of active parental interest in the life of the college or university. Fathers and mothers are encouraged to visit the campus and attend classes, the alumni reunion is an annual event, and appeals are made to the domestic pocketbook for money that will make the college a home away from home. The American dormitory, the American student union, the American health center, the boast of the college or university that it supports or is adjacent to religious organizations, the interest of the institution in initiating, guiding and controlling extracurricular activities—all these move in exactly the opposite direction from institutional indifference to student welfare; and, admirable in themselves, they create innumerable regulations by the college that actually restrict student freedom. You cannot do this or that on the campus unless you are up in your studies; you cannot remain enrolled unless you maintain a minimum competence in a minimum number of courses; you cannot leave the institution at will; and you cannot wander from university to university, since transfer of credits from one institution to another in America demands formal approval in the shape of legal papers that are signed and sealed by a registrar or dean conveying to the receiving institution your status at the time you left the dismissing institution.

A third powerful reason for American inability to accept the total concept of *Lernfreiheit* lies in the ambiguous attitude of the students themselves to the idea. On the one hand, they demand freedom; on the other hand, they do not especially like the responsibility freedom entails. American students want a pattern to adhere to so that they will know when they are done; they want, having paid out their money or their parents' money, to receive tangible wares in return, and these tangible wares take shape as courses and grades and curriculums and the assurance that, if all goes well, at the end of x years they will receive y degrees. Even our graduate schools, which come closer to the European university concept than does the undergraduate college, follow, if in fainter degree, this formula. A quasi-contractual relationship develops between the student and the department of his specialization. Getting a doctor's degree sometimes appears to run on the anthropological analogue of *do ut des,* in which the graduate faculty are cast in the role of gods who are required, whenever proper offerings are made, to bless the worshippers with due rewards. Less anagogically, the American student sometimes feels that to be denied a Ph.D. degree after the appro-

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priate fulfillment of formal patterns up to the final examination can only result from a gross breach of confidence on the part of the examining committee; and many a doctoral candidate has been passed, despite grave doubts concerning his real command of the subject, because he has been faithful, has tried hard, has fulfilled the pattern, and has all the negative virtues. Were he or the undergraduate compelled tomorrow to live the unconditioned life of the German university student of fragrant pipe-smoking memory, he would be likely to exclaim with the poet: "Me this uncharter'd freedom tires."

The fourth difference lies in the constitutions of the American university. The Continental university often gives only the Ph.D. and confines itself mainly to what in American parlance is advanced or graduate work. The British university, of course, has traditionally been composed of undergraduate colleges, and there the university function has been federal, in some sense, rather than independent. But the American university is Janus-faced. The same faculty members teach in both the undergraduate college and the graduate school of arts and sciences; and the undergraduate college, particularly the freshman and sophomore years of the undergraduate college, are more like the American high school than they are like European university instruction. The responsibility of the teacher toward the immaturities he faces in elementary instruction is different from his responsibility toward mature students. This is tacitly recognized in the organization of course work; an example would be the necessary difference between introducing freshmen to, say, the ideas of Karl Marx and the study of *Das Kapital* in the graduate school. Freshman and sophomore work lies in a rather more sensitive area than does graduate work in metaphysics or economic theory; and in consequence not only is the *Lernfreiheit* of the student, so far as it exists, one thing when he begins, fresh from high school, to wrestle with the problems of the world, and another thing when he is writing a doctoral dissertation, but the *Lehrfreiheit* of his instructor is from an absolute point of view also, and I think properly, restricted.

I have hitherto spoken of the restrictions evident in the American concept of *Lernfreiheit.* There are, however, powerful counter currents. Compulsory class attendance is no longer as widespread as it once was. Student self-government, although a government of limited powers liable to be revoked at any time by the academic administration, nevertheless revives a concept of student autonomy as old as the Middle Ages. The American undergraduate actively resents attempts by the administration of the college or university to censor the student paper, the student magazine or the student yearbook, nor does the administration always win in such contests. Students also contest the censoring of speakers who are to appear before student groups. The student does not hold his professors in the same reverence as professors are sometimes held in other lands, and he is quite capable of shrewd questioning and vigorous dissent. Moreover, when academic freedom is invaded on the American campus, students are commonly among its stoutest defenders; and student papers like the *Harvard Crimson* and the *Daily Texan* have been notable champions of intellectual liberty.

Student independence would probably go further were it not for the American system of course examination, grades and honors. The canny student is not unaware of the relation between academic regularity and job-getting, and he is therefore sometimes accused of giving back to the professor on his examination paper what the professor, or the professor's assistant, wants him to give back. The American system of awarding student honors—undertaken from the purest of motives, to be sure, and involving such things as a place on the dean's rank list, election to Phi Beta Kappa or Sigma Xi, and recommendations for fellowships—commonly depends more upon a record of grades than upon the examination of individuality. All this shrinks the area of absolute freedom in learning. I cannot forget a student in a great Midwestern university who refused to take Professor So-and-So's

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course because she wasn't going to spoil a Phi Beta Kappa record for anybody.

So much, in brief compass, for *Lernfreiheit.* If we turn to the area of *Lehrfreiheit,* or freedom of teaching, we note that this concept in the United States seems to be mainly valued in higher education. The public school teachers, including the high school teacher and the teacher in the American junior college, do not enjoy the kind of community respect the teacher enjoys in other countries. The American public school system, or systems, are locally controlled, and local politics can on occasion be a grave threat to honest teaching. From the point of view of the school board or the school committee, the teacher is an employee hired by another employee, the superintendent of schools, and the law backs them up in this theory. The teacher, paid to teach a certain grade or a certain number of subjects in the high school, has only a minor voice regarding what she teaches; and in the past the teacher, in a wide variety of localities, has been forced to sign a wild variety of contracts that often invade her personal freedom. Stipulations have ranged from the length of her skirt to compulsory teaching of Sunday school classes, if called upon, and even her right to go to parties on occasion has been predetermined. The more absurd of these restrictions are now not common, but the power to make them, or others like them, continues to reside with the school authorities. If systems of tenure have come in, tenure commonly turns upon questions of seniority and the like, issues resembling those involved in agreements made between industry and a labor union rather than the unconditional right to teach one's subject matter in one's own fashion. Teacher resistance to restriction has been less well organized and less vigorous than has academic resistance, partly because the turnover in public school teaching is far more rapid than it is in the academic world, partly because the teachers have wavered between organizing themselves on the labor union pattern and organizing themselves on the professional pattern represented by the National Education Association, and partly because the teacher, hired to teach somebody else's textbook, has not the same interest in the advancement of new interpretations and the discovery of new thought as has the research professor in the university.

All this may seem an irrelevant excursion, since our principal interest is in the academic freedom of university personnel. I do not regard the public school situation as irrelevant, because it profoundly influences public opinion about all instruction. The branch of education most Americans know most about is the public schools, including the public high school. These are, so to speak, immediate institutions, whereas the college or university in most cases is far off. The public schools are involved in local politics, their budgets are mainly local budgets, if not wholly so, their administrative heads belong to the local Rotary Club or this or that local church. Inevitably, therefore, an irresistible public tendency exists to think about universities and university teachers on the analogy of value patterns locally known, especially if a state-supported institution of higher learning is in question. If the community has the right through elections to determine what the personnel of its school board shall be and what that personnel, being elected, shall direct to be done, including determining the nature of the curriculum to be taught and the regulations for those who are to teach it, the inference is irresistible that the public has the same right, through a board of regents or through a state legislature, directly or indirectly to determine the policy and the personnel of academic institutions. If the argument is sound that the board hired Miss Smith to perform such and such tasks in the school system and therefore has the right to discharge Miss Smith because it does not like the way she does or fails to do her appointed tasks, or because Miss Brown can do it better, the argument is also irresistible that a board of regents has the same power with respect to college or university personnel. The parent who complains of bad teaching or bad treatment of his offspring in the high school can see no good reason why, should the off-

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spring complain of bad teaching or bad treatment in the university, he should not seek and find a like remedy. Finally, in this regard, almost all discussion of academic freedom is conducted in academic language, not in the vernacular, the consequence being the relative failure of the public to understand the essential difference between the concept of the school and the concept of the university. An informational job needs to be done that has never been properly performed.

But it is time to come to the central concept of academic freedom. The formal definition of it in American terms is still by common consent that of the American Association of University Professors, to which even the courts now turn when the issue becomes moot. In condensed version the statement is this: Institutions of higher learning exist for the common good, not to further the interest of either the individual teacher or the institution. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition. Academic freedom, essential to these purposes, therefore covers both teaching and research. It is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the teacher in teaching and of the student in learning, and carries with it correlative duties.

Tenure, or the right, after a probationary period, to hold one's professional post continuously until the age of retirement, is the bulwark of academic freedom. It guarantees freedom of teaching, freedom of research and freedom in extramural activities. Tenure also requires a sufficient degree of economic security to make the profession attractive to able persons. In any event the teacher is entitled to freedom in the classroom, in discussing the subject of his special learning and its relevant implications, but he may not introduce into his teaching controversial matter not germane to his topic. Of course he must be intellectually free to pursue research work and to make known the results of his researches, the value of which is to be judged in the first instance by his colleagues, and not by outside agencies.

The college or university teacher, by becoming a member of the academic world, does not thereby cease to be a citizen. When he speaks or writes as a citizen, he should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but he must remember that his special position in society carries with it special obligations. As a man of learning and as an educational officer, he should remember that the public may judge his profession and his institution by his utterances. Hence he should at all times be accurate, he should exercise appropriate restraint, he should show respect for the opinions of others, and he should make every effort to indicate that he is not an institutional spokesman.

After the expiration of a probationary period, teachers or investigators should have permanent or continuous tenure, and their services should be terminated only for adequate cause. When accusations are brought and facts are in dispute, the accused professor should be informed, prior to any hearing, in writing, of the charges against him and should have the opportunity to be heard in his own defense by all bodies having the power to pass judgment upon his case. Such, in brief, is the theory.

To us who live in the academic universe all this is self-evident; and the language in which I have set forth the doctrine will seem to many of you absurdly oversimplified. To the common man even this oversimplified version is more unintelligible than not. To him it appears that arrogant professors are claiming exemption from responsibility to those who pay them and demanding privileges they do not deserve. Who are these professors that they should protest against loyalty oaths and deny the right of trustees or regents or presidents or legislators or congressmen to inquire into their doings? If we as citizens, taxpayers and donors send our children to them to be taught, we have a right to find out what they are teaching and to get rid of them in any lawful way if we do not like either what they teach or the way it is taught. This is what we citizens do with congressmen or governors or park commissioners we do not want; we should have the same right in the case of professors. He who pays

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the piper calls the tune. The professors talk a great deal about their right to do as they please; they do not talk at all about their responsibility to us as taxpayers or donors who support the institutions that hire them. Such, or something like it, is, I think, the response of the common man in emotional moments to the theory of academic freedom in the United States.

I am not sure that I can translate the theory of academic freedom into more vernacular language, but since part of the difficulty lies in a failure of the professors to make their case intelligible to the common man, I wish at least to try: The professor has a job to do. Getting ready to do this job has been a long and expensive process, and doing the job in most cases does not bring in much money. The job he does is important to the country because its welfare depends on having this job well done. The professor is a scientist or a scholar; as a scientist he finds out all sorts of new things we can use later on in industry or medicine or defense; and as a scholar he finds things out about the past that make clear what our country is and what other countries are, so that we can all understand each other better. Now since the professor is never going to make a lot of money, we ought to be sure that he has steady employment and that nobody fires him merely because he doesn't like something the professor says or does. Why shouldn't we do this? You can't tell the lawyer what the law is, can you? You don't take a vote to determine whether a doctor should prescribe medicine or a surgeon perform an operation, do you? You don't tell a priest or a preacher or a rabbi what he is allowed to believe, do you? The lawyer and the physician and the minister have studied their subjects and ought to know what they are talking about, and the same thing is true of the professor. Of course, if any of these men violate the law, they ought to be treated like anybody else, but it is not fair to penalize them just for being professors. All we ask is that they keep in mind that when they talk as professors, they make that clear; and that when they talk as private citizens, they make that clear also.

I am not sure my colloquial approach is necessarily the right approach, but the attempt suggests at least that the problem of academic rights and academic responsibilities is inextricably involved with the problem of democratic values. Of course from time to time the integrity of institutions of higher learning in this country has been attacked by special interest groups—by theologians in one period, by business interests in another, by political demagogues in a third, by educational reformers in a fourth; but there is an irresistible tendency to view these episodes as melodrama on a high plane. In this melodrama, villainy in the shape of Calvinism or McCarthyism or special creationism or economic privilege assaults, as it were, from ambush the little band of intrepid explorers who are pushing into the unknown wilderness and there discovering and organizing new areas of order for the benefit of mankind. The little band is for a time defeated and thrown back, and some of its members taken captive; but by and by, righteousness appears, like the United States Cavalry, rescues the beleaguered altruists, defeats villany, and all is well again until the next ambush. As I am myself on the side of virtue and have published from time to time books or essays directed against villainy and denouncing ambush, I trust you will not misunderstand me. Academic freedom must always be defended. But I suggest that our interest in the dramatic detail of cases presented in the American Association of University Professors' *Bulletin* or in television shows of Congressional investigations into possible disloyalty obscures the complexity of the issue in America by reducing the cultural problem to a simple black-and-white, either-or situation. Such famous cases as that of the dismissal of the entire economics department of the Kansas State Agricultural College in 1896 because it would not accept the Populist version of economic theory, or voiding the appointment of Bertrand Russell to a professorship at CCNY in 1940 because the presiding judge thought Russell's prose was full of "immoral and salacious doctrines," present with such startling clarity the naked issue of unwar-

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ranted interference that we naturally incline to the view that Satan still finds some mischief for idle minds. The recurrence of these well-meant interferences with academic freedom in successive generations in this country also suggests that, however pleasing it may be to interpret such contests as a battle between the children of darkness and the children of light, some deeper cultural issue is involved. And the deeper issue seems to me, at least, to be the problem of popular control of what is essentially an aristocratic enterprise.

The enterprise of higher education is essentially aristocratic. The academic hierarchy from teaching fellows up through the august body of full professors is something we commonly discuss in terms of rank—a word we also use about aristocratic society. It is not too fantastic to say that tenure implies aristocratic privilege—privilege not too unlike the privilege of a nobility—and academic nobility has the power, and alone has the power, to recruit its numbers through a scale of ceremonies significantly a scale of degrees, culminating through higher degrees in any case of special distinction in something called an honorary degree. The ceremonial of commencement is intended to impress onlookers with the validity of our aristocratic values, partly social, partly intellectual; and I think it significant that on court occasions we of the academic world invariably break out our ceremonial robes and hoods and gold tassels, marching not higgledy-piggledy or in alphabetical order, but in due academic dignity. We explain that we are only maintaining an ancient tradition; we explain that the doctor's gown is merely an outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual accomplishment; we declare that the ceremonial hood, like the baton of a marshal of France, lies potentially rolled up in the diploma of anybody who will take a first degree in the arts. But all our explanations cannot deny the patent truth that a professorial appointment is not for everybody, a doctoral degree is not something you acquire by mere morality and application, or that, in the academic world, many are called but few are chosen. The disparity between the thousands of entering freshmen of any given year and the lesser number of seniors graduating four years later is, if you like, evidence of a necessary sifting process, just as the disparity between the numbers who enter the graduate schools and the numbers who finally achieve the Ph.D. is evidence of a second such process. The process is, moreover, necessary, and I think that in the course of it rough justice is done; but it is a process of educational selectivity that unconsciously violates a deep instinctual American belief that anybody who wants any kind of education ought to have it.

The patterns by which we select and organize superior brains into a university faculty represent what I may call the Jeffersonian concept of democracy. They are essentially what Jefferson worked out in his scheme of education for Virginia. But they contradict what I dare to call a Jacksonian concept of democratic education, evident in much of the state legislation governing our public schools, including the high school, as well as our publicly supported universities.

The Jacksonian theory, for example, through a misunderstanding of the principles of John Dewey, declares that no child in the public schools should fail and that, if he fails, the fault lies rather with the teacher than with the family or with the child. This, in turn, rests upon the kindly theory that there is some sort of talent in everybody. When the theory comes to deal with the high school, it transforms the older concept of the high school as a college preparatory institution into the concept of the high school as a popular training school for whatever the people want; and simultaneously throws out of the high school, often by legislation, what the people do not want. For example, Greek has disappeared, Latin has diminished, and about 47 per cent of American high schools now teach no foreign languages whatever. The point is not to argue the validity of foreign language instruction; the point is that foreign languages have diminished in obedience to the expression of popular will. The theory, turning to higher educa-

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tion, sometimes results in legislation requiring the state university to accept graduates of the state high schools regardless of what the pupils studied; and in respect of the state universities, these institutions are compelled by law to require every student graduating from them to be exposed to a course in American history or swimming or citizenship or something else dear to the legislative heart. Again, an increase in student population leads to immediate general demands for college expansion rather than to a thoughtful analysis of the question whether an increase in the number of teenagers ought not rather permit the colleges, given this wider range of choice, to perfect better devices for greater selectivity among candidates, so that the nation may hereafter be served by superior rather than by average brains. In sum, an admirable moral belief in education for everybody moves in one direction, and an academic belief in more and more rigorous selectivity moves in another; and the problem of academic freedom and responsibility may perhaps lie at the crossing of these two tendencies.

We of the academic universe are, in respect of my two symbolic epithets, inevitably Jeffersonians. We do not believe in an aristocracy of birth, but we do believe in an aristocracy of brains. We struggle to perfect means of ascertaining from an early age those who have promise of intellectual power; we devise ways of pushing such persons forward into higher and higher realms of specialization; and we invent modes of giving them special protection against the risks of a laissez-faire educational philosophy. We say to the public in effect: if you will trust us, we will put into your hands knowledge and instruments of knowledge that will, we believe, make for a richer life and a happier nation. But to do this we must be let alone. As evidence of what we can accomplish, we point to the vast industrial society created by the application of our findings, to the increased span of life and greater degree of health of the average American, to the security of the country vis-à-vis powerful Communist forces, and to the treasures of art and wisdom we have stored up for you in museums and libraries and in the printed word. If you will send your children to us, we will select from among them, through the instruments we have created, those who seem to us best fitted to become the future intellectual and cultural leaders of the United States.

Such, or something like it, is another and, in a sense, more ironic statement of the philosophy of academic freedom. Put in these terms, the statement has embarrassing parallels. Those of you who remember Professor Ralph Henry Gabriel's brilliant synopsis of the philosophy of laissez-faire capitalism will be struck by certain echoes. Those of you who have read civic philosophy from Plato to H. G. Wells will note an analogue in the notion of an elite of philosophers, a samurai class. I suggest that an understandable suspicion of a samurai class on the part of a Jacksonian-oriented populace underlies a good many attacks on academic freedom. The demagogue always appeals to the crowd, it is true, but careful reading of some scores of cases of violation of academic freedom will also reveal how frequently the interference complained of is a confused, but sincere, desire to stand up for the rights of the populace as opposed to the claims of a minority. Academic man argues that his responsibility is to a nonnational, nonsectarian, nonpolitical body of truth discovered or discoverable; a Jacksonian inevitably holds that the primary duty of the professor, since his is a public function, is to the public, the populace, the people.

I use these three terms advisedly. They are frequently interchanged in political and educational discussion, but obviously they fall into two groups: on the one hand, the public; on the other, the populace or the people. When, under the doctrine of academic freedom, the professors declare that their primary duty is to find out and present the truth, they have from their point of view discharged their principal public duty. That duty is the duty of all honest craftsmen, the duty of performing one's special function fully and fairly in the light of the special axioms that govern the specialty. Any attempt of the unen-

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lightened to interfere with the operations of the craft or to direct these operations to some ulterior end not merely damages the craft and the craftsman but also damages the state. This is evident whether, as in Russia, a scientist interprets his findings according to a political theory of biology, or whether, as in the United States, a literary scholar becomes a mere popularizer of books, pretending that the austerities of art are as simple as A B C. A modern state is an even more complicated mechanism than was Plato's ideal republic, but it cannot be improved when the politician attempts to do the professor's job or the naïve parent tells the expert how to teach. *Crede experto*: that is, if you will put up with a little mistranslation, Trust the expert, or, in Western parlance, Don't shoot the pianist—he's doing his best.

The demagogue on behalf of the populace and the democrat on behalf of the people have their replies. And their most telling argument is not one I have already referred to—namely, that he who pays the piper calls the tune—but one that strikes deeper, although I suspect neither demagogue nor democrat has employed it in my terms. The argument is simply the argument of inconsistency. How in an open society can minority groups sustain closed societies of their own? We do not permit doctors to practice except when they are licensed by the state, nor lawyers, nor dentists, nor clergymen, nor undertakers. We regulate banks and railroads and insurance companies and fraternal orders by law. We expect departments of government that are quite esoteric in their interests to come forward and make public declaration of what they are doing. We require judges to live up to a code we impose upon them; we determine by law when proprietary medicines are improper; we make up our minds through our legislatures whether chiropractors are to be licensed; and so on and so on. We had thought that through the charters we, the sovereign people, granted to private colleges and through boards of regents to govern the tax-supported institutions we ourselves created, we had also determined by law the proper functioning of a university faculty; but we now find that the professors in effect have established a private code through an organization from which regents and trustees and presidents and deans are excluded (or have been). We protest that, although there may be nothing illegal in this code, it is at least extralegal, an *imperium in imperio*, a private and powerful league that questions the operation of the way legal bodies are supposed to control university and college. The professors claim a privilege essentially contrary to the interests of a democratic state, and the proof is that when, through public committees, we try to find out whether there are any traitors among them, the academic population rises up to deny our right to make these inquiries or seriously interferes with the work of our investigators.

I suspect it is extremely difficult for the professor to show much sympathy for what I may call the extreme Jacksonian point of view. Jacksonian or not, however, it may be well to recall one or two leading facts in the history of American education. From the founding of Harvard College in 1636 to the present day, academic institutions in the United States have been directly or indirectly the creatures of government. The picture of a confraternity of scholars spontaneously gathering together and resolving to assure the continuity of knowledge through a system of apprenticeship, whatever is elsewhere true, has virtually no relation to the American problem. The American people, passionately desiring education for their children, have gone about securing it much as they have gone about securing anything else they wanted for public use—through the creation of legal agencies to get them what they want. When they wanted a state university, they established a committee of men charged with the duty of creating one; and when this board, commonly called the regents, went to work, discovering they could not as a body determine whom to hire to teach for the proposed university, they in turn employed an agent of their own, a president, expert as they believed in academic matters, and bade him go to work to assemble

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a faculty. *Pari passu*, the same thing has been true of our private colleges. The picture of scholars assembling and petitioning the state for a charter is simply unhistorical. On the contrary, the charter has had to go out and hunt up the scholars. It was, in a sense, as simple as that. To this day, in point of law, a college or university is not the faculty; a college or university is a governing board, of which, in most cases, not even the president of the institution is a member. I suggest that the extraordinary difference between the American institution of higher learning and the institution of higher learning in other countries can be best understood in historical terms.

The code of academic freedom put forth by the American Association of University Professors is an effort to reserve both the implications of legal theory and the uses of three earlier centuries of educational growth. Inevitably it postulates an opposition between the administration of the American university and the true professional interests of the faculty members. That opposition has often taken dramatic form.

The professional code is not only justified in itself but is slowly winning some standing in law as courts have turned to it for an understanding of the contractual relation between a professor and his employers where suit has been brought for reinstatement. But the popular mind does not as yet either understand or accept it. I believe the popular mind can be brought to accept it, just as the popular mind accepts the implications of the Hippocratic oath in medicine, or the relations of a lawyer to his client, or the seal of the confessional; but acceptance of the code by the people at large will require an educational process not yet attempted by the profession.

Since in other parts of the world university faculties govern themselves to a degree unparalleled in the United States, and in view of what I have called the melodramatic quality in famous instances of violation of the code, it is fatally easy for the academic mind to nourish an inveterate suspicion of governing boards. To my way of thinking, however, the astonishing thing is not the occasional blindness of trustees or the failure of a dean or president here and there to protect academic freedom; the astonishing thing is the patient dedication of most trustees and most regents to the job they have undertaken. Individual members of a board may begin by assuming that a university is like a corporation having so many employees to be paid or discharged as the directors or the president see fit, but they do not long retain this simple view.

The code of academic freedom has made astonishing progress since World War I. It has survived even McCarthyism, but if it is to prevail, it must be translated out of academese into simple terms. As Professor Robert MacIver puts it at the conclusion of his study, *Academic Freedom in Our Time*: "The more direct instruction of the citizen concerning the meaning and service of the university can be conducted on a broader scale, utilizing all the major agencies of communication. The subject should be approached along lines that carry it home to him. For example, he has a high respect for science—the relation between the growth of science and the struggle for intellectual liberty is clear. He believes in 'fair play'—how this applies to the scholar, and to those who traduce him, can be shown in chapter and verse. He believes in democracy—how it depends on the liberty of the mind can well be demonstrated. He believes in America—what the spirit of repression does to its great traditions, to its well-being, and to its standing among the nations can be given simple and effective illustration . . . what is most important is that the people should come to appreciate the university, should learn how much of great and lasting worth it contributes to society, and how essential it is that its freedom be sustained and its standards advanced, should recognize how devoted and how disinterested the work of the true scholar is, and should look upon the institution of learning, not with suspicion from a distance, but from near at hand with affection, so that they, too, will become the guardians of its integrity."

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If You Don't Mind My Saying So . . . . .

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

I shall probably not get around to reading Father R. L. Bruckberger's *Image of America,* but I know that it has been widely praised as what we have all been waiting for—a book by a foreigner in which America and Americanism are estimated at their true value. This fact—if it is a fact—is no doubt gratifying, but I must confess that I was more alarmed than exhilarated by the following passage quoted (also with some alarm) in the *Nation:*

> Now America, your task is to extend the Declaration of Independence to the whole world, to all nations and races. If you are to remain worthy of your heritage, you must now help solve the social problems between proletariat and capitalist nations, and the racial problem between white and colored peoples.

This is, indeed, Americanism with a vengeance and the most unqualified formulation I have seen of a conviction that seems to be assuming the status of self-evident truth. Never before, one is tempted to say, has a nation assumed quite so blandly that it could and should set the whole world to rights. At first sight, at least, it seems that either our arrogance or our sense of duty is unparalleled. Not even the Pax Romana (which did not take in so much territory) justified itself on grounds quite so purely altruistic or hoped to achieve its ends with so little reliance upon *force majeure.* If I understand aright those for whom Father Bruckberger speaks, we are to remake the world not by imposing our discipline upon it, but by a process strikingly similar to that of "permissive" education. We mustn't conquer and we mustn't even meddle. Our role is to be that of an indulgent father who gently leads his problem children onto the paths they should take. Whether the method really works in the bosom of the family is an open question, but there is no question at all that it is hard on fathers. I think we should be a little clearer about what we are undertaking before we are irrevocably committed to it.

It happened purely by chance that I came across Father Bruckberger's eloquent summons just at a time when I was dipping into the history of the century-long attempt to bring the blessing of Christianity to Baja California, and I seemed to sense a missionary zeal curiously similar to that which inspired the Jesuits (as well as the later Dominicans and Franciscans) to persist in one of the most obviously and admittedly disastrous missionary enterprises ever undertaken—also one in which it is impossible to detect the effective operation of any grossly selfish motives.

The Spanish government gave precious little assistance because it could not see in Baja, as it did see elsewhere, a source of wealth. The peninsula was without resources and populated only by miserable preagricultural Indians as low in the scale of civilization as could be found anywhere on earth. The missionaries who carried on were sustained only by their faith and by such financial support as they could get from the gifts of pious individuals. For a century they taught, preached and sometimes suffered martyrdom at the hands of savages who were utterly untrustworthy even when they seemed temporarily "Christianized." When the padres themselves finally gave up and moved to northern California to begin again, the only clear result was the near extermination of the peoples to whom they had ministered. According

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to the best available evidence, smallpox, measles and syphilis had reduced the population from about 40,000 in 1697 to about 5,000 in 1777. After that the decline continued, until today descendents of the aboriginal population have been reduced to a few hundred who continue to live in out-of-the-way places a life almost as primitive as when the white men came.

The missionaries themselves could find comfort only in their explicitly stated conviction that if a native dying of the plagues they had introduced could be baptised *in extremis* and thus saved, it was better that he should die thus than to live and be damned in the end. One of the best of the modern historians, Father Peter Dunne, admits that only on such a premise can the whole missionary enterprise in Baja California be judged as anything other than a tragic mistake. He recognizes further that no secularist can be expected to accept it, and indeed he nowhere unequivocally states that he himself can do so.

To most of those who now propose that the United States should "develop" the whole globe, the presuppositions of the seventeenth-century Spaniard are wholly incomprehensible. They cannot regard them as anything but an aberration near to insanity. But can we safely take it for granted that aberrations that will ultimately seem as incomprehensible cannot possibly flourish in the enlightened twentieth century? It is possible that "economic development" imposed from above on every clime and race will someday seem as uncritically proposed as "Christianity" and that under some circumstances giving primitive man a motor scooter is only a form of baptism no more effective than the other kind in assuring him salvation.

It has sometimes been pointed out (but seldom taken into account) that Europe and America had ideas and ideals before they had machines; that they were civilized before they were industrialized; that such is the natural order of events, and that to teach a primitive to drive a car is to reverse this natural order. The group presided over by the Reverend Mr. Stiggins in *Pickwick Papers* dispatched moral pocket handkerchiefs to the benighted Africans, but at least they couldn't do much harm and may even have represented an attempt to begin at the right end. But we, Marxists as we necessarily all are, say give them the machines, and ideals as well as ideas will follow.

Even if we are surer than we have any right to be that our own way of life is so admirable that the whole world ought to adopt it, are we sure that all the "backward peoples" are any better prepared to imitate us than the Indians of Baja California were prepared to become Spanish Christians? The Indians could live in their own way; they could only die when another was imposed upon them. Is Americanism obviously a success in Japan? Just how "democratic" are the liberated Africans likely to remain? If this sounds somewhat cynical it is partly because I happen to be just old enough to remember very dimly the time when the touchstone of liberalism was sympathy for the brave Boers in their struggle against English tyranny. Who would have supposed then that within one lifetime these same Boers would have become the best current example of all that is reactionary and reprehensible?

"If history repeats itself and the unexpected always happens, then man must be incapable of learning from experience." Who said this first I do not remember: the catch is, I suppose, that sly History modulates the repetitions just enough to make them unrecognizable at first sight. Hence we seldom learn her lessons until it is too late—but we might at least try.

It seems to me that the more all-embracing our determination to impose our blessings and our virtues upon others, the less clear and the less exalted our conception of what they are becomes. The Spanish padres may have been completely deluded, but they knew what they believed and the saving of a soul would have been very much worth while if by any chance the Indians had had souls and if baptism would have saved them. But the surer we become that

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we can and should confer some blessing upon the lesser tribes, the less clearly we are able to define what this blessing is and the less exalted it becomes even in dim outline. We no longer think that they are pagans who might be Christianized. We hesitate to call them, as the Victorians did, "savage" or "benighted," and even "primitive" strikes us as impolitely pejorative. So we have hit upon the wonderfully neutral word "undeveloped" or, still more gently, "*under*developed." What we propose to wheedle them into is "development," which means that mechanization and industrialization from which all other blessings are supposed to flow. Here at home some of us, at least, may have come to feel that "development" which refuses to look beyond the thing itself and tends to be pursued for its own sake is not an unqualified success and that it is creating problems for which we see no solution. But such doubts are not for exportation into underdeveloped countries. "Come on in boys," so the slogan runs, "the water's fine." Follow our lead and you too may soon enjoy the benefits of overproduction, overpopulation and atomic fall-out.

At this point I have no doubt that the more "realistic" of my readers will smile at my naïveté. After all, they will say, we are not really in this business of developing the undeveloped for wholly philanthropic reasons. It is true that we do not hope (like the Roman or the British empires) to increase the national income directly by drawing wealth from colonies, protectorates or spheres of influence. We give instead of take, and that looks like pure generosity. But mercantilism is even deader than laissez faire, and the new economics has taught us that it is by increasing consumption that prosperity is maintained. Or in even plainer words: developing the underdeveloped gets rid of the surplus and keeps the wheels of our factories turning.

To such readers I reply only that I can, if they insist, be even more realistic than they are—or at least a bit more far-sighted. Look a few decades ahead from their point of view, and it will be evident that the last thing we ought to want is to be faced with a world in which all nations and all peoples are "fully developed." Perhaps it would be wise to continue increasingly to send the undeveloped regions our surpluses of every sort, while keeping them as consumers pure and simple. If we make producers out of them all, no dumping grounds will be left. Once the Bantu and the Bushman have reached the point where they are trying to give *us* food, autos and rockets, then we will indeed be in a pickle. If we hardly know what to do with the abundance produced in one country, how could we possibly survive on a fully "developed" globe? Russian progress has already created a problem that haunts our dreams. Is it "realistic" to encourage the emergence of world powers on every continent?

When the times are out of joint there is always a considerable number of people whose only reaction is "Oh cursed spite!" What amazes me is how many representatives of this or that "discipline" are, on the contrary, ready to take the whole problem on and how many of them are quite confident that they can solve it. Consider, for example, the sociologist C. Wright Mills. His opinions, like those of Father Bruckberger, I know only at second hand; but in *The Sociological Imagination*, so I have been told, he expresses the conviction that sociologists have the answer and that it is high time they took a more active role in urging people along instead of being so modestly "objective." They are the "carriers of human reason," and they represent "man become aware of mankind." I gather that his proposals are general rather than specific.

On the other hand, the very eminent social psychologist Brock Chisholm knows precisely what is at the bottom of all our troubles and offers us a packaged salvation almost as compact as Billy Graham's "declaration for Christ," or for that matter, the baptism offered the Indians of Baja California. Gloomily conceding that in all previous history human conduct has been dominated by every variety of antisocial impulse,

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he proceeds thus: "The only lowest common denominator of all civilizations and the only psychological force capable of producing these perversions is morality, the concept of right and wrong, the poison long ago described and warned against as 'the fruit of the tree of knowledge'." To him the source of all evil is the "sense of guilt"; and although I am anxious not to parody his doctrine, I can make nothing out of it except the clearly enunciated conclusion that if no one from infancy on (and especially no one in infancy) were ever made to feel that anything he ever did was "wrong," then human beings would be universally, boundlessly, and without exception peaceable and benevolent. This leaves Rousseau far behind. How Dr. Chisholm explains why aggression and a tendency to persecute the weak reaches down even to the invertebrates I do not know, unless he assumes that the very arthropods have somehow poisoned themselves with ethical ideas.

So far as I know, neither Father Bruckberger nor Dr. Chisholm is aware of my existence. But I find myself quoted with derision in a proposal that the advertising man rather than the sociologist or the psychologist should assume the direction of our civilization. The quotation occurs in an address before an advertising convention by John C. Cornelius, president of the American Heritage Foundation, and was entitled "The Challenge to Advertising from the Field of Public Service: The Pursuit of Political Excellence."

The speaker had circulated a questionnaire to thirty publicists of one sort or another, asking their opinion of the public service function of the advertising profession. Twenty of the thirty replies he received, so he says, "lambasted" Madison Avenue on two counts: for falling short of its public service responsibility; and for sponsoring much commercial advertising that is silly, dishonest or in bad taste. In his reply Mr. Cornelius goes the whole way, and he ends with a peroration that may well go down with those of Nathan Hale and Patrick Henry: "Ladies and Gentlemen of the Advertising Federation of America, are we weak or are we strong? Are we going to be timid, or courageous? Shall we be the *governed*, or the *governing*?" (Italics his.)

If the world is going to be managed by either the sociologists or the advertisers, I would choose the first. But I am not as confident as either of them that they are to be trusted too far, and all this determination to control civilization makes me nervous.

If you believe the Darwinians, the innermost secret of all biological progress from the amoeba to the advertising man was the absence of any planning. Pure chance is responsible for what we are today. And without going all the way with either Darwinism or laissez faire, one may seriously doubt whether it would be wise to remove entirely the element of the fortuitous in human affairs. No man can plan beyond the limits of his own vision, and those limits are pretty close to what is. A thoroughly planned society is inevitably one that cannot get very far beyond the status quo.

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.....*The Revolving Bookstand*.....

The Dismal Science Comes to Life

ASHER LANS

The late Morris Cohen once quoted Max Planck as saying that at the beginning of his university career he had aspired to become an economist. Further study convinced the future discoverer of the quantum theory that scientific economics posed insuperable problems.

Before and after Planck, however, many academicians were able to overcome the difficulties of the field. Their principal tool was the concatenation of assumptions, which, in the course of exposition, became reified into realities. Thus by 1930, simple and mathematically exact models of the economic system had been constructed, were espoused as approximations of fact, and were intermittently used to batter proponents of reform. It was demonstrated geometrically that under competitive conditions (presumed to be the "normal" state of affairs) prices were fixed at the conjunction of supply and demand curves (free of independent determination by producers or merchants), with the factors of production —labor, capital, land—being paid the value of their marginal productivity.

From the time of Say and Ricardo, properly trained economists taught that production automatically created sufficient purchasing power to buy all produced goods. Whatever was saved from current income was perforce invested. Any lag in this process would be cured by a decline in interest rates, wage and material costs, which created irresistible incentive to capital formation.

This may best be described as the equivalent of a biological theory of life which treated death as a perennial adventitious result. Neoclassical value theory, 1930 vintage, conceived the business cycle as the product of "frictions" or extraneous circumstances, regarded sustained unemployment as the result of "high" wages, and suggested that most economic ills could be cured by a return to the competitive conditions which allegedly existed in England during some unspecified golden era.

To the orthodox the depth and severity of the post 1929 depression was an intellectual disaster. In Europe explanation was usually supplied by reference to "maladjustments" caused by the First World War, a thesis whose validity has been vitiated by the prosperity that has followed the greater holocaust of 1939. In the United States the accepted remedy was deflation, although the 1920's had been marked by balanced budgets and a failure to convert increased productivity into either lower prices or higher wages, with the result that both profit rates and maldistribution of income increased while both wage rates and prices remained unprecedentedly stable.

The first two volumes of Schlesinger's biography of Franklin Roosevelt narrate the new President's quest for advice, confronted as he was at his inauguration with thirteen million unemployed, a bankrupt banking system and a farm community on the verge of revolt because of price collapse. Hoover's last thought was that "we are at the end of our rope." The majority of financiers and economists had nothing to suggest except balancing the budget and permitting "natural forces" to work out over the long run, with Mr. J. P. Morgan and his bootblack both presumably to find

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As Others See Us

The United States through Foreign Eyes

Planned and Edited by FRANZ M. JOSEPH

Twenty outstanding representatives of their respective countries—professors, educators, writers, statesmen—give their frank impressions of the United States. The impressions range from the sophisticated observations of Denis Brogan of England, Raymond Aron of France, Julian Marias of Spain, and Daniel Cosio Villegas of Mexico, to the more personal reactions of K. A. B. Jones-Quartey of Ghana, and Marija Vilfan of Yugoslavia. The essays, which often reveal a good deal about the countries from which the authors speak, are presented without any attempt at analysis so that the reader has the opportunity to judge for himself the validity of the views expressed.

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By PHILIP WHEELWRIGHT

This book reflects the current revival of interest in Heraclitus, that philosopher of bitter paradox and hard metaphor, who found in change itself the one unchanging attribute of reality. The surviving fragments of his sayings, presented both in translation and in Greek, are arranged topically to preface eight chapters in which various aspects of Heraclitus' thought are examined. Most arresting among Philip Wheelwright's accomplishments in this book is his success in helping the reader strip off his modern preconceptions and participate in the adventure of a brilliant Greek mind exploring reality with the resources of the late 6th century, B.C. *176 pages. $4.50*

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interim salvation as subsistence farmers in Central Park.

The experimentation in government policy eventually instigated by the depression was paralleled by development in respectable economic theory. In one area—the analysis of income and employment fluctuations—Keynes became both the symbol and the principal architect of the approach to realism. *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* suggested that the savings of one period are not automatically equal to investments in the next time sequence, for decisions to save and invest are made by separate individuals. High employment exists only when the inducement to invest, based on entrepreneurial expectations, is such as will fully absorb the prior period's savings. Otherwise employment and income will decline. Neither interest nor wage-rate reductions suffice to arrest the process. For the variable that determines income is effective demand, which is correlated only to profit expectations and to changes in the propensity to consume.

Like the attempts of most pioneers, Keynes's book is subject to criticism. His terminology is confusing and sometimes contradictory. His analysis is short term, and structural change is slighted. His policy recommendations are predicated on the assumption of secular stagnation, yet his suggestion that continued high income required increases both in consumption and investment has been verified since 1945.

Respectable economic theory has been revolutionized in other directions. Edward Chamberlin and Joan Robinson liberated the analysis of markets from the Procrustean categories of perfect competition and monopoly by adding the concepts of oligopoly and purposeful product differentiation. The less fashionable work of Schumpeter, Galbraith and others has shown that the competitive Garden of Eden never existed and that large scale enterprise tends to reduce production costs and price. The Classical School concentrated on analysis of the distribution of income among land, labor and capital. In recent years there has been a return to Adam Smith's view that the study of growth was the principal function of economics.

The new developments in theory have been quantified by formal dynamic economics, which, using differential equations, has sought to establish functional relations between economic variables and their rates of change over periods of time. The econometricians have attempted to use modern probability theory and statistical inference as a bridge between hypothesis and collected data. (The elaborate precision of algebra and calculus creates an aura of factual accuracy. All the equations, however, involve major assumptions, dubiously subject to verification. If a science has not been established, at least avenues have been opened whereby some reasonable degree of probability prediction may eventually become feasible.)

These brave new worlds of thought are either ignored or attacked broadside in Henry Hazlitt's *The Failure of the "New Economics"* (Van Nostrand, $7.50). Chapter by chapter, almost paragraph by paragraph, the author criticizes Keynes's *General Theory*, sometimes with great subtlety. One of the most beloved theorems—the propensity for personal savings to increase disproportionately as incomes grow—is effectively refuted, but many of Keynes's followers had long since abandoned the concept.

Hazlitt realizes that theory's ultimate aim is to guide policy. His own views are simple, if not necessarily consistent. Sustained full employment is a dangerous goal and may imperil liberty; reduction of government functions is necessary; the "restoration" of free and competitive wages will create high employment and maximize production. It is perhaps descriptive of the author's viewpoint that curtailment of union strength is stated as a major desideratum, but little reference is made to price rigidities resulting from monopolistic industry.

A group of recent books is more responsive to the historical process. *The Economy of the American People* (National Planning Association, $2.00) provides a concise description both of current structure and lines of change. It focuses attention on the prob-

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Asa Gray

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lems of developing a new policy toward "big business" and of securing high employment without concurrent inflation.

This latter problem is discussed in more detail in Arthur Burns's *Prosperity Without Inflation* (Fordham University Press, $2.00) and Alvin Hansen's *The American Economy* (McGraw-Hill, $5.00). Crowning a career devoted to measurement of business cycles, Professor Burns became Chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisors in 1953. He accepts, implicitly, the Keynesian method of analysis but focuses attention on the control of prices. This reflects two prepossessions. First, Burns thinks that governmental tools for combatting recession have been vastly improved; we have learned that a cyclical dip must be offset quickly, and political pressures will ensure that the necessary countermeasures are adequate. Second, he believes that while recent price increases have been moderate (except under influence of war), the economy is no longer capable of downward adjustment, so that "creeping inflation" is a long-run danger. The effective remedies, it is suggested, are self-restraint by labor and business, government budget surpluses in periods of high employment, and greater use of monetary controls. Interesting suggestions are made for cushioning the harsh impact of high interest rates on small business and housing.

Frankly, I am more impressed by Professor Hansen's book. One of his key contributions is to highlight the pejorative choice of terminology: "The word 'inflation' is used to describe the astronomical price increases experienced by Germany after the First World War, and the same word is applied to the comparatively mild increases in prices in American history. The phrase 'inflationary pressures' has often become, I suggest, virtually synonymous with 'expansionary forces'. Brakes are thereby applied, and output is sacrificed to rigid price stability."

It is suggested that true inflation exists only when prices rise without concomitant increase in output. Eighty years of statistical measurement show that every period of expansion in output has seen rising prices; the correlation may denote causal connection. Moreover, the secular danger still is deflation. Capital losses are more serious in sharp depression than under the impact of a gently ascending price level. Utilization of interest changes to curb prices—the favorite weapon of the present Administration—is criticized. To be effective, the increase in rates must be sharp. This is least significant for large corporations, which have substantial capabilities for internal financing and obtaining long-term, fixed-rate loans. On the other hand, "hard money" policies increase the long-run cost of financing local government, imperiling or making more expensive community services indispensable in a period of rapid population growth. Similarly, the cost of home ownership is unnecessarily increased as the mortgage rate goes up. (The possibilities of maintaining low interest rates on government bonds and the resultant economic benefits are developed at greater length in Hugh Dalton's valuable *Principles of Public Finance,* Routledge & Kegan Paul, 10s. 6d.)

Professor Hansen is alert to current issues. The American economy, he feels, has worked best under the high pressures present since the end of the Second World War. Production has increased spectacularly, but prices have remained stationary except under the impact of the overwhelming shortages induced by war. The need for federally subsidized housing, education, public health and international aid programs must be met if domestic prosperity and international survival are to continue. Shall such programs be sacrificed to the advocates of high interest rates? Have we become "so gadget-rich that we can't afford to build culturally rich communities?"

Aspects of the same issues are raised in a number of other recent books. John Kenneth Galbraith's *The Affluent Society* (Houghton Mifflin, $5.00) is a sardonic masterpiece. The focus of attention is communal balance: "Failure to keep public services in minimal relation to private production and use of goods is a cause of social disorder or impairs economic performance. . . . Presumably a community can be as

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well rewarded by buying better schools or better parks as by buying bigger automobiles." Experience since 1945 proves that high income taxes have not curtailed business activity. However, since most of the needed services are supplied by local governments, a general sales tax is the only feasible way to secure funds needed for these community services.

John Chamberlain's *The Roots of Capitalism* (Van Nostrand, $5.50) rides in a contrary direction. It is inferred that technological innovation (the key to progress) needs inventors and enterprisers willing to risk their own money on harebrained schemes, which only the "freely choosing man" and not governments would dare initiate. This seems to me an article of faith that ignores wild ideas, such as the release of atomic energy or the launching of space vehicles, which only governments can afford and which governments have successfully executed. Chamberlain's argument is carried to the extreme. The welfare state should be dismantled in favor of voluntary, private action, which, for example, can reconstruct the slums. Here experience may serve as a measuring rod. The Title I program has indeed demolished slums, with "profit all around," but it has left our burgeoning metropolitan areas unplanned and provided more homes for the well-to-do than for the dispossessed poor.

Evsey Domar's *Essays in the Theory of Economic Growth* (Oxford University Press, $5.00) applies dynamic models of Keynesian theory to a number of problems. Interesting illustrations are given of the use of discretionary accelerated depreciation rates in promoting private investment. A strong argument is made for the proposition that, with growing national income, a high (even an increasing) federal debt need not have deleterious economic effects. Equally stimulating is Richard Musgrave's *The Theory of Public Finance* (McGraw-Hill, $12.50), a path-breaking study that analyzes fiscal policy and tax alternatives in light of modern income theory and the prevalence of inelastic prices and wages. *Readings in the Economics of Taxation*, an anthology edited by Richard Musgrave and Carl Shoup (Irwin, $7.80) contains a number of articles that discuss the same topics, with less realistic assumptions and greater reliance on mathematical formulation.

A number of the books mentioned in the preceding paragraphs have noted the growing importance of financial institutions, which, unlike commercial banks, are not susceptible to control by open market operations or changes in the rediscount rate. An over-all study of the entire range of insurance companies, factors, building loan societies, pension and similar funds and their effect on the money market is badly needed. A model of such a study has recently been provided for England in *Committee on the Working of the Monetary System, Report* (Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 15s.). Two of its conclusions run counter to current American policy. Initially, the management of public debt is described as a fundamental task of a national bank, which cannot be abdicated by a policy of so-called neutrality to the "free play" of the "markets." (The contrary official view in Washington, developed by proponents of "sound currency," has caused vast capital impairment to small bondholders and greatly increased the burden of interest payments.) Second, it is concluded that monetary measures are by themselves incapable of materially affecting the economic cycle unless applied with a vigor which itself creates emergency.

Impelled among other things by the demonstration effect of American, West European and Russian experience, many of the recently liberated colonies have launched ambitious expansion plans. Concurrently the instigation and maintenance of growth has become a popular field for analysis. Several recent texts contain helpful general surveys. Benjamin Higgins' *Economic Development* (Norton, $12.00) is the most comprehensive. The institutions and developmental programs of a number of countries, such as Libya and Indonesia, are summarized; the growth of capitalism in the "advanced" countries is reviewed for comparative purposes; and major policy questions, such as control of population increase and the finance of expansion, are outlined. Valuable for its uniquely com-

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plete collection of data on global resources and production, together with comparative 1882 statistics (the latter of unestablished accuracy), is Robert Doane's *World Balance Sheet* (Harper, $10.00).

The Theory of Economic Growth by Professor Lewis of the University of Manchester (George Allen & Unwin, 30s.) has the breadth of approach characteristic of the best English writing. Euclidean models and endless statistics are eschewed, and emphasis is placed on certain recurrent problems. Underdeveloped countries are characterized by inadequate capital formation. Historically this has been overcome only by increasing the efficiency of agriculture so as to create a surplus of funds that are then invested in industry. On an accelerated basis this necessitates either sharp taxation of farm profits or moderate inflation. The process also requires vigorous governmental controls and substantial foreign lending to permit balanced growth.

Much of the same terrain is traversed in Charles Kindleberger's *Economic Development* (McGraw-Hill, $6.50), which interestingly poses the choices under debate but seems to me to err in its attempt to apply economic principles developed in advanced countries to nations in birth. One can make an impressive theoretical argument for permitting the "free market" to control investment, but this necessarily will retard the rate of development. Minimizing bureaucracy is another praiseworthy goal, but (since the decline of the international private capital market) what agency other than the state has or can develop such preconditions of growth as the overhead capital of transit and power facilities?

A sharp difference in viewpoint marks two studies. The great virtue of P. T. Bauer's *Economic Analysis and Policy in Underdeveloped Countries* (Duke University Press, $3.00) is its emphasis on the necessity for firsthand observation of local conditions. Natural resources and institutions are so varied that generalizations are a poor guide to policy; additional official statistics in backward countries are of uncertain reliability. It is also strikingly pointed out that most nations in Asia and Africa are far less culturally, technically and socially advanced now than the West European countries were at the Industrial Revolution's onset.

These observations are extended to unwarranted conclusions. The governments of the former colonial areas lack expert personnel with whom to devise and implement economic plans. Classical theory should be given its head. It is preferable to permit private groups to accumulate and reinvest their own savings, rather than to make capital formation a matter for state concern. (If the highest market returns are available for soft drink vendors, presumably Ghana should permit investment in Coca-Cola factories rather than build irrigation projects.) Finally, the utmost freedom should be allowed to the free rein of competitively determined prices. No reference is made to any instance when such policies have actually led a backward economy through a sustained break-through.

Gunnar Myrdal approaches this field with an extraordinary background of diversified experience and training. *An International Economy* (Harper, $6.50) is marked by extreme pessimism. The leitmotif is the suggestion that for the underdeveloped countries "static economics may be explosive politics." Aneurin Bevan has reminded us that, except in thinly populated countries, nineteenth-century industrialization was pushed by canalization of the gains of technical progress into high profits. In an unevenly developed world, free trade reduced food prices, making it possible to keep factory wages low. High savings were plowed back into factories, as part of a cumulative process that kept expanding production. The welfare state did not emerge until high levels of national income had been attained.

Under the pressure of competition with Communist regimes (themselves accumulating capital by restraining consumption) and of local demands for improved living standards, the past patterns cannot be followed by democratic regimes in underdeveloped countries. Their difficulties are compounded by rapid population growth and secular worsening of the terms of trade

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against the foodstocks and raw materials they export. The "liberal" policies of free trade and exchange convertibility preached by the United States constitute another handicap.

Myrdal's suggestions are limited. Population pressure may be eased by lifting barriers to immigration. Vastly expanded economic aid is necessary; other advanced countries should join with the United States in becoming donors; to eliminate local resentment, assistance programs should be administered by international agencies. Radical control of foreign exchange, progressive income taxation, moderate inflation, and programs for augmentation of productivity are all needed. Such policies must be integrated by strong governments.

With the possible exception of Hazlitt and Chamberlain, all of the writers discussed here are dubious of the validity of their own theories. For economic theory deals with refractory sets of phenomena whose interrelations are hard to disentangle, in an area where historical influences, imperceptible structural changes and irrational motivation all play a role. It is small wonder that many of the most distinguished economists have been poor prophets. Fascination and terror follow the realization that this uncertain "science" is inevitably called upon to solve pressing and long-run problems of statesmanship.

Brief Comments

A HISTORY OF WESTERN MORALS. By Crane Brinton. *Harcourt, Brace. $7.50.*

The special aim of the author of this book is to achieve by the methods of the humanist (rather than those of the scientist) reasonably sound generalizations about the changing moral preferences of man in the Western world as revealed in the competitive struggle to realize the dominant moral ideal of a particular cultural period; as in the later Middle Ages, for example, the ideal of the "Knight and the Saint." The author is very careful not to impose his generalizations upon his data, allowing them to emerge in course and supporting them with adequate documentation.

Obviously, the critical evaluation of the accuracy and scope of this extensive and complex evidence must be left to scholars in the particular cultural periods involved. To this reader this study seems a model of reasonableness and scholarly caution. The author finds no easy answers, as is wryly indicated by the title of the final chapter: "Conclusion: In Which Nothing Is Concluded." He avoids handy labels and takes another careful, and sometimes irreverent look at long-established popular convictions and traditional professional interpretations. The argument is enriched by interesting excursions and wise comments.

Considered as a literary production, the book, although good reading, leaves something to be desired. The style, as Mr. Brinton himself remarks, is pedestrian and sentence structure is often awkward. Some readers will be troubled by occasional vulgarisms, or, in strange contrast, by verbal pedantry. But at worst these can be considered as only minor irritations in a rewarding intellectual experience.

MARTEN TEN HOOR

THE HOUSE OF INTELLECT. By Jacques Barzun. *Harper. $5.00.*

Mr. Barzun, in the role of gadfly, decries the state in which Intellect now stands, not only in America but in "any nation that adopts egalitarian democracy, mass education and journalism, the cult of art and philanthropy, and the manners coincident with these." Intellect is not to be confused with intelligence or with mind. Intellect is intelligence or mind equipped with formal disciplines, habits, resources, and employing a store of common knowledge and operating systematically.

The force of the book comes from Mr. Barzun's disdaining to waste time on manifest ignorances and stupidities. Its target is

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not the worst, but what we generally consider the best aspects of our culture and society. Yet much of what it attacks as shortcomings of our age and culture actually is rooted in human nature itself and has been, directly or obliquely, the target of satirists in all ages.

Although the book is epigrammatic and sharply focused in short passages, its progression of idea and argument on the full chapter scale is by no means as clear and orderly as could be wished. Also Mr. Barzun occasionally is pretentious while tilting at pretensions, and may be justly teased about a certain "buzzing hircocervus."

Yet it is a powerful, welcome book, calculated to embarrass all of us at procedures and habits of our own minds, professions or groups. He exposes a sterile cant that stunts us in art, science, education and our cult of philanthropy. It is an important book for the thoughtful and self-critical, needing and deserving discussion far beyond the imposed limits of this brief note.

EDMUND FULLER

THE STRUCTURE OF NATIONS AND EMPIRES. By Reinhold Niebuhr. *Scribner's. $5.00.*

Again, Reinhold Niebuhr, in a book of many fresh insights, explores the tragic ambiguities of "the human situation." Niebuhr concedes that human freedom is capable of historical growth; but he warns against optimism, for the ambiguities of the human situation persist, increasing freedom does not necessarily mean increasing rationality, and mastery over nature may be destructive as well as constructive.

The author finds that both great imperial powers today, the Soviet and the American, fit into "the recurring pattern" of imperialism because they identify parochial norms and relative values with universal absolutes, thus promoting fanaticism, intransigence and conflict. He argues cogently that nuclear weapons will not be brought under international control, but he does not entirely despair. He clearly sees armaments as only part of the total power situation, and he has pertinent suggestions about how the United States might improve its power position, particularly through wiser social and ideological politics in Asia and the Middle East, preparatory to attempting meaningful disarmament negotiations.

Niebuhr's pessimism is deeper than Arnold Toynbee's. Toynbee sees some evidence that a new universalism is emerging, but Niebuhr sees the continued vigor of national states as the primary fact of world politics; and this, he feels, eventually will curtail both of the new imperialisms and at the same time preclude the organic cohesion necessary for a voluntary and genuine international community.

Now, if gunpowder did much to subdue the feudal provinces, as Niebuhr correctly notes, then why may not nuclear weapons, in a somewhat similar fashion, chasten the national states?

WILLIAM G. CARLETON

JUST BEFORE DARWIN: Robert Chambers and *Vestiges*. By Milton Millhauser. *Wesleyan University Press. $4.50.*

"We do not trace the operation of a broad pervasive force—a man's response to the spirit of his time," writes Professor Millhauser, "by notebooks and literary allusions. . . ." What Millhauser says of Robert Chambers and the *Vestiges* is as true of Darwin and the *Origin*. The Darwin year has produced more than its proper quotient of source hunting by way of notebooks and allusions and has yielded comparatively little understanding of pervasive forces. Indeed, a considerable proportion of Darwinian centennial writing is unhistorical in perspective and carping in spirit. While the existence of a Darwinian revolution has not yet been denied, some volumes suggest that Darwin and Darwinism had much less to do with it than commonly has been supposed.

This book is a noteworthy and refreshing exception. One expects a study of a Darwinian forerunner to make out as good a case as possible for its subject. But Millhauser is judicious, cautious and thorough. Chambers at last emerges as a man thinking and *Vestiges* as a result ends its public career as an epithet. Both helped to pave

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THE CONSERVATIVE ILLUSION
by M. Morton Auerbach

Conservative ideology is not a mere blind resistance to change. It is an aspiration based on positive ideals and a specific view of human nature. The conception on which it rests —a community integrated by ties of affection and tradition—goes back far beyond Edmund Burke to Plato, but it has been reformulated in each period of history to cope with changing problems and realities. Only rarely, however, has Conservatism been consistent, because it has usually been forced by its values to resist the prevailing course of history. This book is a provocative evaluation of Conservatism in general and of the "New Conservatism" in particular. The inconsistencies of contemporary Conservatism are worse than they ever have been, the author says, because the realities of the twentieth century are further from Conservative ideals than those of any other period of history.
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the road for Darwin, and the *Vestiges* presented the most complete synthesis of the evidence for transmutation of its time. Why Chambers was ridiculed by scholars and read by the public is cogently analyzed. Why Darwin was successful with scholars and the public alike shortly thereafter is a part of the Darwinian problem.

Professor Millhauser has written one of the best books published during the Darwin anniversary. He has produced *the* volume on Chambers and the *Vestiges*.

BERT JAMES LOEWENBERG

FLYING SAUCERS: A Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Skies. By C. G. Jung. Translated from the German by R. F. C. Hull. *Harcourt, Brace. $3.95.*

"Why should it be more desirable for saucers to exist than not?" Dr. Jung asks himself and the reader. Leaving the question of their physical reality aside, he examines the ways in which saucers turn up in modern art, dreams of psychoanalytic patients, in history and in daily occurrences. Because of his belief that we are at the end of the Christian era of archetypes ("God images"), Dr. Jung looks to the flying saucers —which, incidentally, were first sighted in America, the scene, also, of the Martian "invasion" of 1938—as a new potential archetype. He points out that archetypes arise from collective emotional tension that seeks to be dissipated by means of an all-embracing, "redeeming supernatural event."

Dr. Jung suggests that contemporary world distress is a result of the "strain of Russian policies and their still unpredictable consequences." This strain could be relieved somewhat if a collective symbol heralding a resolution of difficulties appeared. It is possible, reasons Dr. Jung, that the saucers are a herald, through their various associations, of a symbolic wedding between Soviet Russia and the United States.

The argument of the book is advanced at leisure through pleasant groves of hermetic philosophy, astrology and mythology. Curiously, the book lacks force, just as the saucer phenomenon lacks real impact today. For example, consider the difference between the panic spread by the prewar Martian episode and the calm, even complacent manner in which the more recent saucer reports have been received. Wonder and awe before the supernatural seem to atrophy as if strangled by the growth of knowledge of the natural.

SIDNEY L. WERKMAN, M.D.

FREE ASSOCIATIONS: Memoirs of a Psychoanalyst. By Ernest Jones. *Basic Books. $5.00.*

Ernest Jones, to whom Freud "extended a warm welcome," has already demonstrated his place in the world of psychoanalysis by his authorship of the three-volume *Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*. In his own words, Jones was extended this welcome as to one "from the outside world." In this book, unhappily incomplete because of the death of the author, we have an opportunity to savor some of that "outside world."

Free Associations covers the period of Jones's life from his birth on January 1, 1879, to Armistice Day, 1918, and the death of his first wife after only eighteen months of marriage. He weaves in sufficient prenatal geneological information to establish clearly the Welsh roots that undoubtedly played a large part in Jones being an outsider in the medical world of England, and particularly in the cliquish snobbery of Harley Street. It would be interesting to explore the implications of this journey from Wales to England to Vienna in relation to Jones's response to Freud, another outsider once deemed a pariah. Unfortunately, this book is written with such restraint and understatement, consistent with the author's life in the presence of the genius of Freud, that we can only guess and speculate about this.

But what Jones, aided by his son Mervyn (who has compiled the last four chapters from manuscript and appended an Epilogue), has accomplished is to bring alive an era in England and English medicine. His sometimes trenchant characterizations of colleagues of his early years and his warm, simple straightforwardness make up the outside world he brought to Freud and Vienna. This was the instrument that was to bring the English tongue to psycho-

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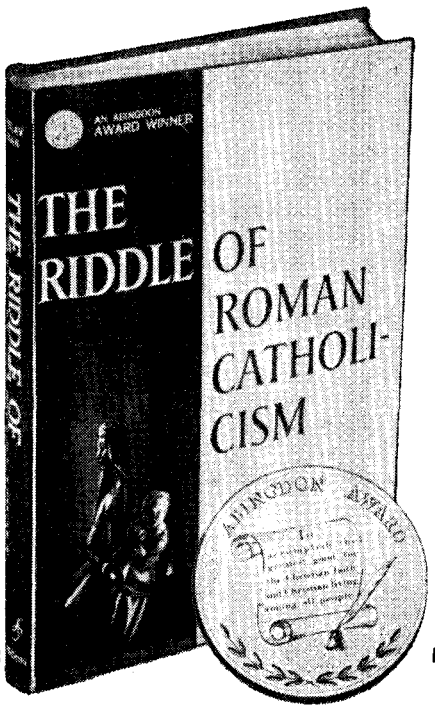

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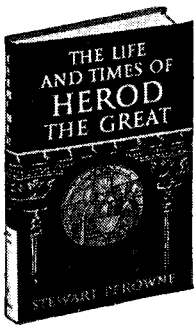

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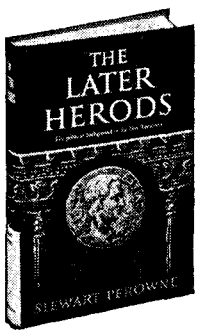

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analysis and much later to bring the founder of psychoanalysis out of Nazi Austria to the free world.

Quite apart from Jones's part in the history of psychoanalysis, this warm personal journal of a young doctor deserves attention. The fact that this man has played such a significant role in psychoanalysis makes this book that much more valuable.

NORMAN KELMAN, M.D.

THE WARRIORS: Reflections on Men in Battle. By J. Glenn Gray. *Harcourt, Brace. $3.95.*

This personalized account of battle and the men involved in it is based on letters to friends and excerpts from the journal of a philosophy professor who served as an infantryman in the Second World War. His reflections concern recollections and forgetfulness, love, death, guilt, the image of the enemy and the future of war. Mr. Gray's ten-year study of war literature adds depth and scope to his account.

Two enduring appeals of battle, comradeship and sacrifice, especially in death, form a recurring theme. They are significant to men in battle because "the self that dies is little in comparison with that which survives and triumphs."

The author's sensitivity, displayed throughout the book, is particularly evident in his discussion of love, from the purely physical, which is similar to the impersonal violence of war, to that which preserves and cares. The reader learns just how much Mr. Gray cares in excerpts from his journal: his contempt for National Socialists who shunned responsibility by claiming they were forced to do what they did, even if it meant joining the party in 1928; his disgust with American officers who wantonly destroyed property; his compassion for war victims; his trepidation on discovering that he was becoming a "soldier."

Mr. Gray, in 1944, wrote in his journal: "I know that in order to survive this time I must love more. There is no other way. . . ." These sentiments, from a scholar unable to fit the mold of professional soldier, offer wise counsel to a restless and chaotic age.

ANNE PLAUT

THE IDEA OF THE UNIVERSITY. By Karl Jaspers. Edited by Karl W. Deutsch, with a Preface by Robert Ulich. Translated by H. A. T. Reiche and H. F. Vanderschmidt. *Beacon. $3.75.*

In his second book in the "Seeds-of-Thought" series, Karl Jaspers reappraises the philosophic purpose of the university and proposes antidotes for the conditions that now threaten its fulfillment. Central in his discussion are two directives—that the unity of truth must be recognized constantly, and that research must be the first function of the university. Professor Jaspers is well aware that the growing edge of learning is usually found in research on highly specialized projects, but he insists that these specialties "are not alive except as members of a single body of learning."

The same quest for unity is emphasized in his discussion of the university as an institution. The university must be free in its single-minded pursuit of truth, free from the influence of state, church and private donors. In a community of scholars and students, loyal to their search for truth, there must be solitary study, free communication with open criticism and co-operation —an intellectual life warmed by the companionship of a common purpose.

These are counsels of perfection, not new as the author acknowledges, but wise and cogent. They come with special validity from a man of Professor Jasper's academic experience and achievement.

WILLIAM TAEUSCH

OUR PUBLIC LIFE. By Paul Weiss. *Indiana University Press. $4.50.*

In *Our Public Life* Professor Weiss explores the ways that the Ideal is manifested in society. Weiss does not find a simple relation between man and society but rather a series of concentric circles. Men give up their native rights for benefits from public existence that are justified only when they compensate for the rights that have been yielded to society. Natural Law is based on a common good to which positive laws and the state should conform, but is itself considered more limited and less satisfactory

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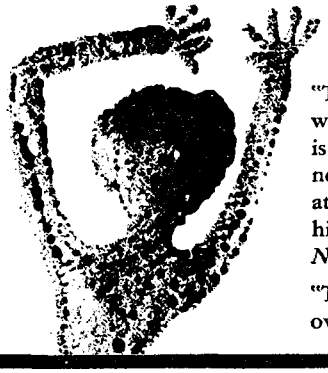
nature and man's fate



by GARRETT HARDIN

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—FRANK G. SLAUGHTER, *N. Y. Times Book Review* $3.00

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than the Law of Civilization—which is based on a culture transcending social and political boundaries and which is intimately related to religious experience and to areas of human existence that cannot be fulfilled by the state.

Weiss's book does not seem to be written for the "class of reasonable men" who are concerned with actions and their consequences, although a place is made for them in the lower circles of public existence. Rather his purpose seems to be to make a place for "priests and teachers, poets and sages" as they determine the "locus of desirable values." In the process most of the burning issues that troubled men like Locke or Rousseau are lost in the unfolding of the Ideal. It is hard to see what implications would follow from the discussion when we get down to the hard questions of what rights men have in particular and when a government is justified in the powers it exercises over individuals.

WILLIAM W. HOLLISTER

THE PRESIDENT'S CABINET: An Analysis in the Period from Wilson to Eisenhower. By Richard J. Fenno, Jr. *Harvard University Press. $5.50.*

An analysis of the place of the Cabinet in the American political system has been needed for some time. Professor Fenno has met this need judiciously, and with careful scholarship. In particular, he has avoided the temptation to magnify the role of the institution that he has studied. The Cabinet, he shows clearly, is what the President chooses to make it.

President Eisenhower has created a Cabinet Secretariat, and has made an effort to provide agenda for the meetings, and to make such meetings occasions for discussion of policy. But Professor Fenno feels that the experiment has not been brilliantly successful, and it is doubtful if any succeeding President will wish to repeat it. The members of the Cabinet are primarily administrators, and often are little interested in the problems of the other departments. It seems doubtful whether the Cabinet can be made to play a central role in the evolution of policy, despite various proposals to increase its importance. One may ask the question, which Professor Fenno hardly touches on, whether the National Security Council is not the agency through which matters of broad national significance can best be discussed. Yet it is, of course, true that integration through this body touches only on questions of foreign affairs.

The essence of the matter, as stated by the author, is that the American form of government is fragmented, rather than systematized. It resists systematization. It is worth while to seek to make it more coherent, but the task, as the author indicates, is a difficult one.

DEXTER PERKINS

NEHRU: A Political Biography. By Michael Brecher. *Oxford University Press. $8.50.*

This book is the most comprehensive study to appear of the complex that is Jawaharlal Nehru. The many diverse streams of influence that converged to produce "the most romantic and heroic figure in modern Indian history" are skillfully evaluated in Mr. Brecher's scholarly selection of materials from state papers, party records, speeches, books, articles, conversations and intelligent observations. Gandhi's influence, Nehru's uncompromising passion for India's freedom, and the high quality of Nehru's intelligence and personal sacrifice for his country emerge as major clues in solving the mystery of how a Brahman of the highest caste could become and remain throughout India's difficult years of social and political upheaval the "idol of the masses" and "the indispensable and unifying force in Indian society since 1947."

But all is not enchantment. Mr. Brecher correctly includes criticisms of Mr. Nehru as an administrator, on his failure to make sound converts to his philosophy from among the leaders of his Congress Party, and for relying too much on the inchoate will of a people with only brief experience with the democratic process to ensure the indefinite implementation of his commitment to democracy and social reform.

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count of both Nehru and Nehru's India, Mr. Brecher's book can help us appreciate the grave problems confronting the leadership of those nations that won freedom in the atomic age.

ALONZO G. MORON

ITALY: A Modern History. By Denis Mack Smith. *University of Michigan Press. $7.50.*

General histories (written in English) of Italy since unification have long been conspicuous by their nonexistence. This has been true in spite of the availability of excellent studies on special phases of the period, especially on fascism, foreign policy and Giovanni Giolitti. At last, however, we have the historical synthesis for which historians have been longing in Denis Mack Smith's *Italy: A Modern History,* part of the University of Michigan "History of the Modern World" series, edited by Allan Nevins and Howard M. Ehrmann.

This book is a classic of its kind and certain of the success it so richly deserves.

SHEPARD B. CLOUGH

FRANCE: A Modern History. By Albert Guérard. *University of Michigan Press. $8.75.*

Professor Guérard again has placed American readers in his heavy debt with this thoroughly delightful history. For the greater part of the story one theme predominates: the growth of national consciousness and unity. For the period since 1940 a second emerges: the increasing inadequacy of the nationalist framework for an understanding of France or any nation.

Two quotations illustrate the quality of Professor Guérard's approach to history: "The most tragic thing about history is not its inevitability but, on the contrary, the fact that it might so easily have been otherwise"; and, "Clio, a romantic muse, gloats over disaster and spurns quiet progress. The healthiest part of a nation's life is usually ignored by historians." The understanding of the first of these truths lends to Professor Guérard's history its dramatic quality; and he is at his best in portraying the real progress in social, economic and intellectual life, especially during periods of political decadence.

The common belief that "the French have been better than their government" is shared by Professor Guérard, and he makes a convincing case. But will this always be true? In spite of Professor Guérard's optimism about the Fifth Republic, this reviewer can find little to make him think that the future will be different.

In spite of sharp criticism of United States policies, Professor Guérard's order of loyalties commands respect: to France, to the United States, to a united Western Europe and to civilization.

JOHN L. CHASE

THE FROZEN REVOLUTION. POLAND: A Study in Communist Decay. By Frank Gibney. *Farrar, Straus and Cudahy. $4.75.*

Frank Gibney, staff writer for *Life* and author of *Five Gentlemen of Japan,* has been remarkably successful in a difficult type of journalism: portraying and analyzing the condition of a nation in that interval between the day's headlines and the retrospective researches of the historian. His subject is Poland since its curious revolution of 1956—a revolution that was "frozen in its tracks," that led neither forward to a fully free society nor back to full Communist orthodoxy.

Mr. Gibney is altogether persuasive in his presentation of the conflicting domestic and international pressures producing this "state of suspended animation" and also in depicting the attitude and position taken by some of the leading characters of this tense and still unresolved drama—the frustrated intellectuals, Cardinal Wyszynski and the central figure, Wladyslaw Gomulka.

With respect to the future Mr. Gibney feels—perhaps too pessimistically—that the precarious balance sustained for these years is dependent upon an international equilibrium that may be slipping away through laxness and indifference in the West. At the same time he believes—perhaps too optimistically—that "Poland opened the door to democracy's peaceful reinvasion of the world of Communism."

HENRY L. ROBERTS

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THE DRAGON'S SEED: Peking and the Overseas Chinese. By Robert S. Elegant. *St. Martin's. $4.95.*

In Peking's exploitation of the instinctive "loyalty given to China by the overseas Chinese," Mr. Elegant sees a major threat to the security of Southeast Asia. Except in Thailand and the Philippines, the close-knit communities of *hua-chiao* ("Chinese *sojourning* abroad") form "an indigestible lump in the body politic," acutely sensitive to the racial and cultural factors that separate them from their host countries and bind them to their ancestral motherland. Nevertheless, their dominant position in commerce and industry—their control over rubber, tin, wholesale and retail trade—virtually gives them the power to paralyze the economic life of the entire region.

In the struggle for the allegiance of the overseas Chinese, Formosa has been unable to compete successfully with Peking. Through literature, films, Chinese-language schools, and commercial pressure, "the Communists have nearly taken the *hua-chiao*." Appealing to the "overwhelming race consciousness of the overseas Chinese," Red China has systematically utilized them for "direct political action," as an "adjunct to Peking's domestic program and as a channel for the conquest of Southeast Asia." Although the author's survey of this communal problem comprehends Burma, Thailand, Indonesia, Indochina and the Philippines, the core of his discussion concerns Peking's influence on the Chinese communities of Malaya-Singapore. In his opinion, the "ultimate aim" of American foreign policy should be the assimilation or accommodation of the *hua-chiao* to their hosts.

JOHN M. STEADMAN

THE HARMLESS PEOPLE. By Elizabeth Marshall Thomas. *Knopf. $4.75.*

This adventure goes into stranger places than do most travels. Here one shares with Mrs. Thomas not only the harshness of the remote and little-known Kalahari Desert of central South Africa, but also the minds and lives of the hungry, naked little people who live there. The great expanse of the Kalahari Desert stifles with heat in the summer and freezes in winter (June and July). During the hot season "the sand reflects the sun until the air all over the veld shudders and dances . . . human beings and animals alike gasp for air and water."

Home for the Bushman, a clearing in the grass with a shallow pit to sleep in and a place for the fire, gives little protection. A tree offers shade and places to hang personal belongings. A woman "does not leave her fire in the evening . . . because people will say that she doesn't like to stay home." Instead she calls across a few feet of grass to the neighboring clearing. Mrs. Thomas writes of the excitement in eating from a swarm of ants, a well-cooked leather sandal or a lizard; and in the sensation of staring at a couple of ostriches until they realize that you are not one of them, and trot away.

The book is vivid and poetic, written by a gifted writer whose sympathetic interest and affection for these pitiful yet pitiless people overcame the squeamishness that even hardened travelers must at times feel when confronted with such marginal human life. When the culture of the Bushman is compared with the probabilities suggested by the archeology of early man, Mrs. Thomas' adventure adds a further dimension, far back in prehistoric time.

A good map is thoughtfully included in the front, but the geographically meticulous reader cannot always find where he is or just how he got there. A travel track or route would help the next edition. Nevertheless, *The Harmless People* is an unforgettable story.

SYDNEY CONNOR

HENRY PURCELL, 1659-1695: Essays on His Music. Edited by Imogen Holst. *Oxford University Press. $4.25.*

Like most such *Gedenkschriften* aimed at a fairly wide reading public, this little Purcell tercentenary offering's nine essays are as variegated in interest and value as they are in subject matter and authorship.

For the music historian, Eric Walter White makes a good case for the theory of a missing conclusion to Act II of *Dido and*

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Aeneas, based on the libretto of the 1700 revival. To the performer, Benjamin Britten addresses an unconvincing apologia for his subjective and cluttered Purcell *continuo* realizations.

The book's qualitative gamut is best shown, however, in two articles for the more general reader. First Peter Pears manages to say a few pleasant things about the composer's uncanny sensitivity to the alliance of speech and melody; but somehow Mr. Pears's writing, unlike his singing, has a way of making the most vital matters appear trivial.

In the book's most original and engaging article, Michael Tippett describes the sense of historical continuity with Purcell's stage works that he, as a composer, requires to create in a related form. In succinct fashion, Mr. Tippett reminds us that with only one masterful exception, Purcell's stage works are half-operas at best and no substitute for the integrated music dramas that *Dido*'s creator might have left us.

DONALD L. LEAVITT

HEIRESS OF ALL THE AGES: Sex and Sentiment in the Genteel Tradition. By William Wasserstrom. *University of Minnesota Press. $4.00.*

Mr. Wasserstrom's book is a model of what might be called the new anthropology. He examines the changing image of the American woman in low and high culture, in recipe books, newspapers, sociology journals, cheap fiction, as well as in the novels of James, Howells and Robert Penn Warren, among others. The anthropological excavating is not piled up as mere tabulated rubble but is used to establish an ordered context for a discussion of the heroines in literature.

Mr. Wasserstrom's clean, bright analysis of James's *The Golden Bowl,* for example, can well stand alone. It is both solid and brilliant, and the insights lead to useful revelations. Against the scrupulously prepared background, however, the analysis introduces into James's novel a new, rich and valid contrapuntal theme intimately relating the art to the actuality. Without ever adulterating his full literary sensibility, Mr. Wasserstrom roots the literature he considers deeply and finely in social history. Conversely, his close readings enrich the social history.

The implications of Mr. Wasserstrom's study are piquant, and he explores them provocatively yet gracefully. He finds Americans blending two opposed strains in their heroines, "sugar and spice." For a good period, the heroine vacillated between and often combined "nymph and nun," to cite another of his cleverly summarizing chapter titles. It is especially refreshing and encouraging to find him handling complex, delicate Freudian matters, like the father-daughter ties in our fiction, with a sure sobriety.

MORRIS FREEDMAN

THE WORLD'S ONE CLOCK. By Louise Townsend Nicholl. *St. Martin's Press. $2.95.*

There is no poem in Louise Nicholl's new collection that strikes one as very different from a poem out of her *Water and Light,* published in 1939. She has never written a transition book (like Yeats's *The Green Helmet* or, more recently, Robert Lowell's *Life Studies*) where the poet changes his tone or shifts his attention to new materials. She accepts the world and, what is rarer, accepts herself. Her poems display serenity. When we run across an ominous line like "This is the ripe, reaped season of disaster," we can be confident that through contemplation the poem will end:

But in the look of barn and birch one sees
How brother has loved brother, sister sister.

Her fine technique, already proved in other books, is in no way diminished. A master of rhyme and assonance, she can turn out a flawless sonnet. If one may carp a bit it is with her soft diction, which makes it difficult to grasp the poem as an immediate experience. There are poems about time and the seasons, light and love and joy—too many abstractions and too few *things.* The end of the first poem is typical:

. . . to fill
The room, the universe, the soul, until
The brimming quiet glows in single rapture,
Time and the light forevermore one creature.

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Readers will find few surprises in these thirty-one short poems, little anxiousness and pain; however, after reading the chaotic work of many recent poets, they may indeed welcome (to take her line) "The song, the sum, of a continuing mind."

EDWARD KESSLER

THE THIRD VOICE: *Modern British and American Verse Drama.* By Denis Donoghue. *Princeton University Press. $5.00.*

The Third Voice is a solid and engaging book. It belongs on the shelves of anyone interested in the drama. Of the nine verse-dramatists whose work Mr. Donoghue studies in some detail (Yeats, Auden, Cummings, Eliot, Fry, Stevens, Eberhart, MacLeish and Pound), Eliot justifiably receives the lion's share of attention.

In five perceptive chapters on the plays from *Murder in the Cathedral* through *The Elder Statesman,* Mr. Donoghue celebrates Eliot's formulation of a verse-line that is at one and the same time a recognizably regular prosodic measure and an inobtrusively flexible measure of discourse. But Mr. Donoghue's celebration is not completely unrestrained. He is aware that it is not the line itself which is Eliot's achievement. When all is said and done, to the sophisticated ear, the line is a mere Senecan echo. It is the redefinition of dramatic verse demanded by Eliot's use of that line which is the true achievement. That redefinition is best stated in Mr. Donoghue's concluding paragraph:

> The essential characteristics of dramatic verse would seem to be that the language is generative, answering to a pressure *forward* (which is in the movement of the acts imitated) toward the fulfillment of the play's "theoretic form"; that it is continuously agile in miming the speaker's "movements of the psyche"; that it compels primary attention to the mind speaking rather than to the language being spoken; and that its sharpest focus is directed on the minutiae of changing relationships within the play.

The core of the book is devoted to an exposition of Mr. Donoghue's sense of the importance of Eliot's plays. As a consequence the chapters on the other playwrights, although they are occasionally witty and generally sensitive, seem less concentrated, more perfunctory. That one should feel so is not a reproach to the author; it is rather a tribute to his powers. One would have liked more.

WILLIAM ALFRED

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The Reader Replies

THE READERS REPLIES *carries miscellaneous comments by readers and authors on various articles which have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington 9, D. C. Because of limitations of space, we cannot guarantee to print all letters received.*

—EDITOR

In regard to the letter of J. Donald Adams, appearing in your Autumn issue:

Over the years I've come to think of Mr. Adams as a conservative and somewhat unimaginative critic, one with little sympathy for difficult or novel works of art. In remarking that a poem can sound old-fashioned to one sort of reader and excessively modern to another, I used Mr. Adams (along with Mr. Hillyer) as an example of the second sort. If I have misjudged a sympathetic reader of modern poetry, I am sincerely sorry.

RANDALL JARRELL
Greensboro, North Carolina

* * *

It is deplorable that our quality magazines only rarely devote their pages to a discussion of the plastic arts, and that, when they do, the writers "debunk" aspects of contemporary art rather than emphasize its values. The very subtitle of Cleve Gray's essay, "Narcissus in Chaos: Contemporary American Art" [AS: Autumn, 1959], is misleading, for it concerns itself with painting alone, or rather that small segment that has become known as Action Painting. An uninformed reader might, after finishing the article, believe that there is nothing left in today's America but the Abstract Expressionists—as though we did not have a Magic Realist like Wyeth, a Surrealist like Seligmann, an Expressionist like Levine, showing their work on the same walls, often simultaneously, with De Kooning, Motherwell and Kline.

The work of the so-called Action Painters may not be as important as their literary spokesmen claim, and there are, undoubtedly, many ill-trained and untalented people among their numerous imitators. But I object more strongly to Mr. Gray's general attitude to art than to his condemnation of a particular movement. (It is his privilege to love or hate individual artists or trends in art.) For Mr. Gray endorses censorship of the artist! Why shouldn't an artist be predominantly concerned with his own personality? Isn't man's soul his most precious possession? Why is an artist "irresponsible" because he doesn't hold himself "accountable to standards of visual reference"? Hasn't it always been the privilege of a creative person to invent for his heart's delight, and to ignore the prosaic reality of everyday life? Why should an artist be chained to any "order" that may stifle his creative urge? If every artist did not consider himself his own legislator, would there ever have been any changes in art?

I would not like to see the "unlicensed freedom of an artist" curtailed by critics, dealers, patrons or the state (all attempts made in Soviet Russia, Fascist Italy or Nazi Germany to impose upon the artist *qua* artist obligations of any sort have led to tragic impoverishments of art). If the "sense of communal responsibility" had outweighed the feeling of spiritual and emotional freedom, Redon would never have created his mystery-laden images, nor would Ensor or Munch have painted their bizarre or macabre fantasies, for the communities in which they lived certainly resented all they could see on the canvas (if they bothered to look at all).

An artist has one obligation to his fellow men: to pay taxes. Apart from this, he is subject only to the laws of his own soul. It is preferable that his work be "unintelligible" to the "unhappy spectator" than that the artist betray the exigencies of his vision

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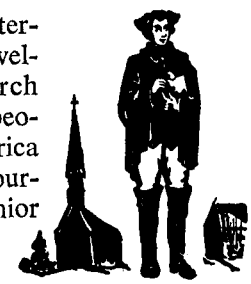

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by forcing his art into the narrow coffin of a prescribed order. When he feels that he has exhausted his visionary power, he will stop painting. Marcel Duchamp should no more be blamed for being preoccupied with chess, than was Giacomo Rossini for having ceased to make music in the middle of his life.

It is the very approach to art demonstrated in Mr. Gray's article that has led the Abstract Expressionists, and particularly the critics allied with them, to go to the other extreme and negate or ignore even the most tenuous fetters. Indubitably the Action Painters have been provoked by too much stress on order, on intellect, and by those who claim to know "what really constitutes a work of art." I, for one, prefer the artists to break through and extend, with every new work of art, the aesthetic frontiers of mankind.

ALFRED WERNER
New York, New York

* * *

In the Autumn issue of the SCHOLAR I detect a common assumption in the essays of Joseph Wood Krutch and Gerald W. Johnson. Both men appear to believe that the aristocrat of intellect is, by definition, the person who finds himself most frequently at odds with a social or political majority. Possibly because I live in a favored corner of a region famed for its moral individualism, I do not find, in talking to my neighbors, that it is only the superior minds who comprehend fully the blessings of liberty or the official custodians of enduring nonmaterial values who are the only victims (and self-appointed scourges) of the tyranny of the majority. I should guess that almost every American citizen, as he reads his daily paper, dissents from the majority action or view of some group, Congress, a political party, a business corporation, a labor union, an advertising agency or a representative assortment of public and private "educators."

If Jefferson's ideal of a democratic society guided by intellectual aristocrats is defensible, it must be on the ground that people of superior intelligence lead rather than

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criticize their neighbors. To do so, they must be of their society rather than above it. Moreover, as men of high intelligence but average human impulses, it is reasonable to assume that the aristocrats will disagree more sharply among themselves than with their less perceptive fellow citizens. I am not the kind of equalitarian who advocates equal slices of the same kind of pie for everyone. But I am deeply offended by writers who assume that it is only people of superior brain power who can withstand the erosion of moral and aesthetic values in a democratic society afflicted with the plague of materialism and the conformist attitudes that it breeds. Writers for THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR who cherish the link with Emerson's thinking implied in the title of the magazine would do well to avoid an attitude of intellectual snobbery. By the same token, any writer who addresses himself to your readers as a saving remnant or fraternity of chosen spirits is violating the spirit of Phi Beta Kappa.

American democracy is built on the assumption that there is no necessary connection between knowledge and public or private virtue. As long as those who lay claim to knowledge are willing to share it with their fellow citizens without also claiming moral superiority, I suspect that the assumption will continue to enable all of us to get along with one another and to enjoy somewhat more personal freedom than we deserve.

RICHARD M. JUDD
Marlboro College
Marlboro, Vermont

* * *

I am writing for all tyros like myself in the Shakespeare controversy.

Professor William T. Hastings on "Shakspere Was Shakespeare" [AS: Autumn, 1959] seems a bit on the pat side. Would it be interesting and useful to ask someone like Richard Bentley (of the Chicago Bar) who authored "Elizabethan Whodunit: Who Was 'William Shakes-Speare'" (Journal of the American Bar Association, Feb-

(Continued on page 144)

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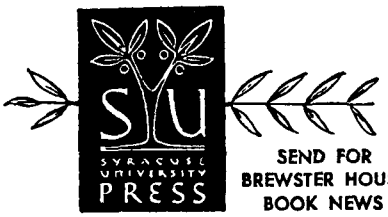

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(Continued from page 140)

ruary, 1959) to submit comments on Hastings? In particular, how do the uncommitted stand on the evidentiary value of the "facts" principally relied on by the Stratfordians, and said by Hastings to be improperly disregarded or overlooked by the opposition. For example:

1. The monument at the Stratford Church showing Shakespeare with pen in hand and inscription referring to "all that he hath writt" which Hastings dates from "before 1623."

2. The inscription on the gravestone of the daughter of the man of Stratford.

3. Contemporary literary references to "Shakespeare" which Hastings considers references to the Stratford man as a person.

4. The Leonard Digges utterances in prefaces to the First Folio in 1623 and the 1640 edition of Shakespeare's poems.

AMY RUTH MAHIN
Washington, D. C.

* * *

As I read Karl Shapiro's "Modern Poetry as a Religion" in the Summer issue, I thought of calling the attention of AMERICAN SCHOLAR readers to its competence by making a list of questionable statements. We are told, for example, that the work of the four poets he is concerned with illustrates what he calls a "central Jewish-Christian doctrine" and—notice—"at this point . . . becomes anti-American. . . ." He informs us that "God, significantly, does not come into the system" of Ezra Pound, a conclusion to set beside Pound's:

> Hilary stumbles, but the Divine Mind is abundant,
> unceasing
> *improvisatore*
> —Canto 92

But a list of such bloopers would be long and exhausting, and incompetence is not Mr. Shapiro's worst fault. The nature of his article can perhaps best be indicated by substituting in his peroration the words "Jewish" and "Judaic" for the words "Anglo-Saxon" and "puritanism," and changing the subject spoken of from the work of his four poets to the work of another poet, himself. All else is exactly quoted.

It would be interesting to speculate upon the narrowly "Jewish" character of Mr. Shapiro's work, but I had best not go into that. Suffice it to say that it has all the earmarks of the Judaic at its worst. Its bitterness, its sense of exile from one or another homeland or paradise, its strong theocratic flavor, its sanctimoniousness, its hatred of spontaneity, originality and freedom, its insistence on orthodoxy—these are all symptoms of the Judaic hatred of poetry and its cynical abuse for purposes of power.

Almost as true, I suppose, one way as the other. I hope it would not have taken the Editor of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR long to return a manuscript that contained such a paragraph. I am naturally surprised that he did not return Mr. Shapiro's. I can only trust that the "Independent Thinker" in America—even if a Jew—does not think bigotry loses its essential character when one stops generalizing about Jews and Judaism and starts generalizing about Anglo-Saxons and their "puritanism." Having admired Mr. Shapiro's work, I am disturbed by his article and at a loss to account for it.

VINCENT MILLER
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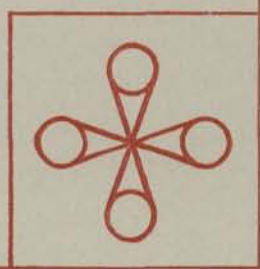

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